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CAPTAIN ANTHONY WILDING

Braden.

PHYSICAL ENERGY.

A Statuette by Paul Troubetzkoy.

[*Frontispiece*

CAPTAIN ANTHONY WILDING

BY

A. WALLIS MYERS

To set the cause above renown,
To love the game beyond the prize,
To honour, while you strike him down,
The foe that comes with fearless eyes ;
To count the life of battle good,
And dear the land that gave you birth,
And dearer yet the brotherhood
That binds the brave of all the earth.

SIR HENRY NEWBOLT.

HODDER AND STOUGHTON
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PREFACE

In writing this volume I had a threefold purpose: the first, to preserve some record of a strenuous life, of which the final act was its chief glory; the second, to offer a small tribute to New Zealand, the over-seas Dominion which bred Captain Wilding and many another volunteer who has fallen in the great fight; the third, to suggest that the cult of sport, fostered in this country, has proved, in its discipline of body and mind, a material advantage to a nation suddenly called to arms. War depends for its principles on science, but for its practice on high moral virtues. Courage and comradeship are important, but one quality is even more essential. We may describe it as "a resignation of all ends but one, and the continual concentration of the will and

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the intelligence upon that one." That rare quality Anthony Wilding possessed.

My thanks are due to Mrs. Wilding for her sympathetic interest, her permission to quote from many of her son's letters and postcards, and for the loan of several photographs; to my friend Mr. F. M. B. Fisher for particulars relating to Christchurch; to Lieutenant H. C. Woodward, R.N.V.R., for much valuable data respecting Captain Wilding's work at the Front; to Mr. C. T. Craig, Mr. Joseph Dixon, and others for the loan of letters; to several of my lawn tennis friends for reminiscences.

A. W. M.

ASHTEAD,
January, 1916.

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I

THE QUESTION

ANTHONY WILDING, fighting for that Empire of which he was a unit, fell on May 9, 1915. Official intelligence of his death was conveyed to his father, Mr. Frederick Wilding, K.C., at Christchurch, New Zealand, through a report, dated May 14, addressed to the Director of Air Department, Admiralty, London :

"SIR,—It is with the deepest regret that I wired yesterday to report the death of Captain A. F. Wilding, R.M., who was attached to the Armoured Car Force.

"From information since received, his three-pounder lorry had been in action on the 9th inst., in the vicinity of Lestrem, up to 4.30 p.m., about which time the shell-fire became so intolerable that the

gun's crew was sent to the trenches for shelter, Captain Wilding and three Army officers retiring to a dug-out close by. This was, however, shortly afterwards struck by a large shell, which killed the officers there, Captain Wilding dying in such a manner that his death must have been instantaneous.

"I beg to draw your attention to the fine work carried out by this officer. His loss will be greatly felt from a technical point of view, as he was carrying out experiments of great importance. On every occasion he had displayed the greatest bravery, exposing himself to every risk whilst working the armoured cars with the advanced forces of the Army. His loss is much regretted by the officers and men of the Armoured Car Division under my command.

"I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

"REGINALD GREGORY,
"*Acting Commander, R.N.*"

I begin this modest monograph of my friend with that report because it proves that Anthony Wilding, in the few months he had been on active service, had already made his mark. More, he had already impressed his personality upon his senior officers. They mourned him, not because in the tension and turmoil of battle there had been time for much intimacy, but because in their brief glimpse of him, in that transient communion of souls which is permitted in moments of mutual peril, some of his buoyancy, some of his great courage, and some of his philosophy of life had passed into their own consciousness. They had been the better for his coming.

Why were men in many countries attracted by Anthony Wilding? What was the talisman that enabled him to dispense with the ordinary passports of life? Why did he ingratiate himself so easily and so rapidly with people of distinction in all walks of life?

He was not a scholar. He cared nothing

for politics; he hated war. Of books, music, and the fine arts he had but cursory knowledge. He never played nor dressed the part of a "man about town." He had no use for stimulants or narcotics; he neither smoked cigars nor drank whisky. The only form of scientific research in which he showed intelligent interest was mechanical traction. Wheels and petrol and quick motion he loved—loved them because, himself a perfect human machine designed for rapid propulsion, he was instinctively drawn to machines created by man for the same object; but very few who loved him had that passion. . . .

It may be that his physical vigour, the giant in Anthony Wilding, appealed to the æsthetic sense. He had won the highest renown at an amateur pastime. That renown had brought him prominently before the public; it had also brought him into contact with the royal and distinguished patrons of that pastime. But other champions had enjoyed the same pre-

rogative ; they had not created the same bonds. . . .

The physical factor, the reverence of the weak for the strong, is a partial but not a full answer. Anthony Wilding had more than his body to offer the world. The man was finer than his play. He possessed that rare, elusive quality called personal magnetism. Beneath his perfectly developed frame there beat the heart of a child. Like a child, he was pure and ingenuous. Like a child, he was unconscious of control and impatient of discipline. Like a child, using only the art of an unsophisticated nature, he claimed and won indulgence. Yet when the real test came—in sport or in war—Anthony Wilding revealed a steadfastness, a faculty for concentration, a self-reliance and a resourcefulness which made up a strong character. Physically and mentally he became a man ; spiritually, he was a boy until the end.

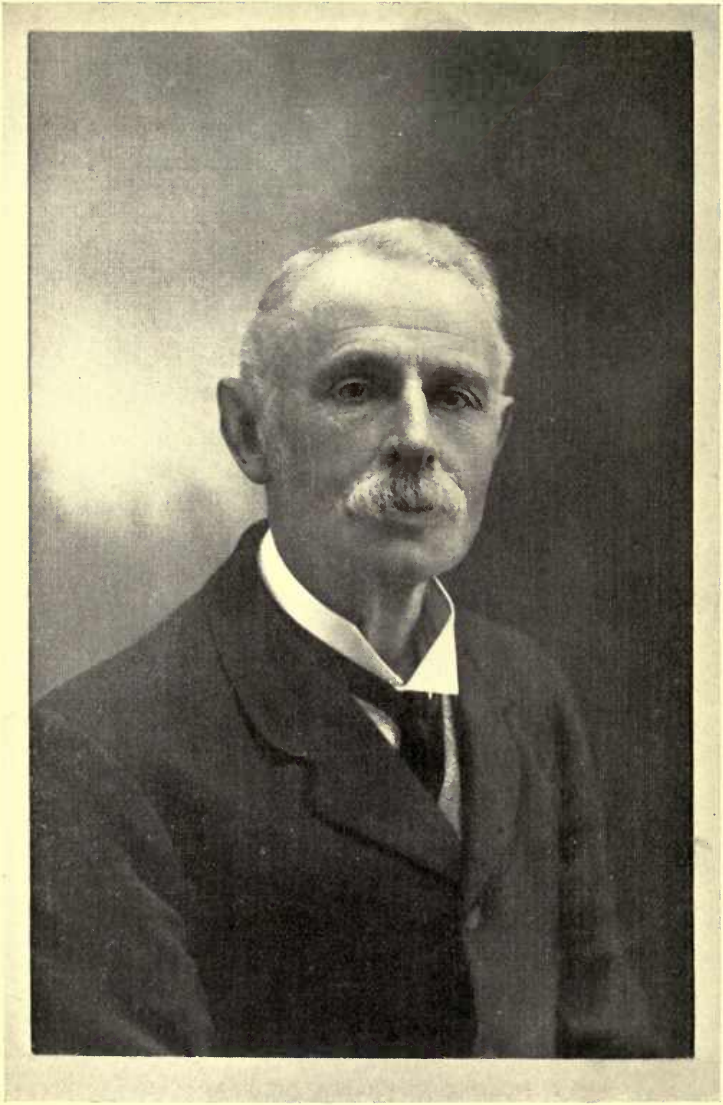
II

THE HOME AT OPAWA

ANTHONY FREDERICK WILDING, the boy who was to win renown in sport and war, was born at Opawa, near Christchurch, New Zealand, on the last day of October, 1883. He was named after both his parents, natives of that English West country which, in the placid atmosphere of its towns, and the sober, restrained character of its citizens, resembles the Islands of New Zealand. His mother, a lady of rare acumen, homely virtue, and common sense, was Miss Julia Anthony, the daughter of Alderman Charles Anthony, J.P., the modern founder and six times Mayor of Hereford. His father, Frederick Wilding, K.C.—head of the firm of Messrs. Wilding & Acland of Christchurch, and a leading

and much-respected member of the New Zealand Bar—was the son of a country doctor and was born in Montgomeryshire.

Boy and man, Frederick Wilding was an all-round sportsman of the type which, by influence and action, by precept and practice, has done much to mould the strength and character of our Empire. He was the best all-round athlete Herefordshire has produced from the days of Tom Spring, the champion of the prize-ring, to those of Jack Sharp, the international cricketer and Association footballer. He left an indelible mark on the athletic records of his public school. What C. B. Fry accomplished at Repton, Frederick Wilding almost achieved at Shrewsbury. As a school bowler he attained very high rank, and there is little doubt that had he remained in this country he would have made a considerable name in county cricket. The promise of a great cricketer held out in Herefordshire was more than fulfilled in New Zealand. When Shrewsbury's team



FREDERICK WILDING, K.C.

visited the Dominion more than a quarter of a century ago, Mr. Wilding, bowling for Eighteen of Canterbury, dismissed eight batsmen for twenty-one runs.[1] The identical ball which did the damage is preserved—I suspect by Mrs. Wilding, who kept, as was often her habit, an analysis of the match—in the household at Christchurch. As a Rugby footballer in the 'sixties and early 'seventies Frederick Wilding was well-known in the West of England; he only narrowly missed international rank. He was a first-rate boxer. On the running-path he had a great turn of speed; he won many foot-races at all distances. Once for a wager he walked a mile, ran a mile, and rode a mile on Hereford racecourse within the stipulated time. As a long jumper he cleared 20 ft. 6 in. at Shrewsbury, a feat which stood as a public-school record for many years. He was a first-class oarsman in his youth, rowing at

[1] On March 26, 1888. Among his victims were George Lohmann and Johnny Briggs.

Henley and winning the West of England fours and other trophies.

Like Anthony, he embraced lawn tennis a little diffidently at first, but his fine hardihood of limb and wind, a quiet and even temperament, and an eye already trained at cricket, shooting, and billiards, made him an ideal pupil. Those were the days before the service had developed into a great engine of attack, when men were more disposed to angle quietly for their openings, to use their minds even more than their muscles, though these were always tough and enduring. Frederick Wilding was five times doubles champion of New Zealand. That is an adequate tribute to his prowess. His partner was Mr. R. D. Harman, a prominent architect in the Dominion. Even now you may sometimes find "Dick" Harman and the strategic captain of his side pitted in a friendly "knock-up" on the latter's court.

Since there is scarcely a branch of amateur sport that Mr. Frederick Wilding

has not touched and adorned, it is not surprising that Fownhope, his home at Christchurch, should reflect his love for games and outdoor life. I imagine Fownhope—so called after a pretty village on the Wye associated with Mr. Wilding's family—to be an ideal training-school for sportsmen, an essentially English home, and yet a home governed by unrestraint, by open-handed hospitality, and that serene tolerance which puts every visitor at his ease. The family motto would surely be *Mens Sana in Corpore Sano.*

Here is an impression of Fownhope, furnished by the Hon. F. M. B. Fisher, formerly a member of the New Zealand Cabinet, who has been a welcome guest on many occasions:

"The spacious and comfortable house, with its broad verandas, is situated in the midst of many broad acres, planted with fruit trees and flower beds in great profusion. Close by the broad lower veranda

is a grass tennis court, which is the pride of Wilding *père*. Beyond that is the asphalt court with volleying board at back, and just beyond that the dearest little studio where Miss Cora Wilding spends many hours with the brush and palette.

"Within easy distance is the open-air swimming-bath, truly 'a thing of beauty and a joy for ever.' This beautiful white stone bath, filled with ever-running crystal artesian waters from the fish pond on the terrace above, is surrounded with a hedge of evergreens. In the summer time this evergreen hedge is covered by climbing sweet-peas of varying colour and scarlet poppies. Reflected in the water, these colours give the bath a beauty which is indescribable, while the joy of a cold plunge after a hot five-set 'go' was always a feature of Fownhope tennis.

"Away beyond was the meadow, where, amidst the sweet-smelling clover, the cows and horses grazed, and beyond that again the quiet little Opawa River flowed under

the weeping willows and the little rustic footbridge on its way to the sea. Cherries, plums, strawberries, raspberries, pears, apples, and gooseberries are here in abundance, and when one is tired of tennis and swimming and eating fruit, then there is the bowling-green or the billiard-table for more relaxed effort.

"The interior of the house only serves to inspire one's interest in sport, for everywhere about one finds intermingled the countless 'trophies of the chase' which are a tribute to the athletic capacity of the father and the sons. Here is a photograph of the English cricket eleven which visited New Zealand in the 'eighties. There on the mantel is the cricket ball, mounted in silver, recording the fact that Wilding *père*, playing against the same English team, took eight wickets for twenty-one runs. Let it not be forgotten that the father of Tony was a great athlete in his day, with many remarkable performances to his credit, and the debt the son owed to his

father for his many good qualities as a sport should not be forgotten.

"Everywhere about one finds trophies, for Tony nearly always sent out to his very devoted mother the tangible results of his wonderful successes. Almost every country in Europe has been made to pay toll to the powers of that young New Zealander of whom we were all so proud, and there, in that little secluded corner of the Antipodes, may be found the evidence of his exactions."

Another impression of Fownhope has been kindly written for this volume by Mr. Ernest Beamish, who, a member of the English team which visited New Zealand in 1912, enjoyed the hospitality of the Wildings. He writes:

"I had already met Mr. Wilding some six years before, when he accompanied an English team which played in the Austrian championships at Prague, and partnered Anthony in the doubles. At that time he

seemed the youngest member of the team, although in years he was by far the oldest.

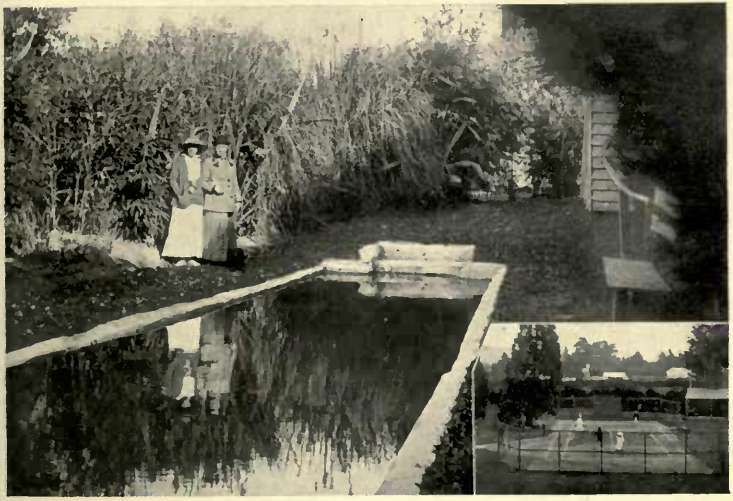
"I found him at Christchurch full of that enthusiasm and keenness, which had not in the least diminished, but had rather increased during the intervening years. Whether he was discussing eel-traps or the slaughter of fruit-eating blackbirds with his youngest son, talking politics, in which he was intensely interested, with the Hon. F. M. B. Fisher, or playing tennis with one of our party on his own court, there was the same interest in whatever he was doing, and the same zest of youth to do his best.

"Every detail of our visit is fixed in my memory. After we had been officially welcomed to Christchurch by the lawn tennis enthusiasts and Mr. Wilding, we, the lucky ones, were put into a small car and driven up to the house by Edwyn Wilding, a lusty schoolboy of fourteen, whose joy in the job was undoubted and quite unrestrained, as every dangerous corner and crossing on our route bore

witness. In fact, once we only failed by a few feet or so to hit a tram which was proceeding at about twenty miles an hour across our line. After this, a corner taken at exuberant speed on two wheels, and a grazed gatepost of the ancestral home, came as mere every-day occurrences, and we left the car and our Jehu feeling as if we had indeed lived. I believe this incident of the damaged gatepost was responsible for Mr. Wilding's final refusal to allow young Edwyn to take the car out alone.

" Mrs. Wilding and Miss Wilding, whom we had met previously in Auckland, made us welcome to the house. I found Mrs. Wilding as delightfully kind and homely as her husband was young and enthusiastic. Both seemed to me to have found the art of living and to have realised it in their several ways. In Mr. Wilding's eagerness and pleasure in trying all things, and in Mrs. Wilding's interest in her children, they each had a sure antidote to old age, which seemed destined to pass them by.

a



b *c*

FOWNHOPE : (*a*) THE HOUSE ; (*b*) THE SWIMMING-BATH ; (*c*) THE ASPHALT COURT

"Mrs. Wilding was very glad to see us, and made us very welcome in so kind a manner that I felt as if I had not travelled across the world at all. And then I was able to talk to her about her son, and tell her I had seen him win his third championship that summer. She showed me her book of cuttings and photographs, relating to every championship or tournament in which Anthony had taken part, and with photographs and pictures from every illustrated paper. She took the greatest pride in his successes, and seemed most anxious to hear all about him and his doings in general.

"Mr. Wilding, although very proud of his son's success at the game, yet appeared to me to have a more tempered enthusiasm. He seemed to have a particularly sane point of view with regard to sport and games. Although as athletic and keen on all games as possible, he yet made one feel that he did not regard lawn tennis as the be-all and the end-all of existence, and that

there were 'better things.' I think in this connection he must have felt Anthony's inability to settle down into a lawyer, with politics as the ultimate goal, an ambition which he was very anxious for his son to fulfil.

"His delightfully unconventional habits were well illustrated by an incident. We had just sat down to dinner when Mr. Wilding looked out of the window and remarked to Fisher, at that time a Cabinet Minister, 'Fisher, there is a shilling on the lawn; is it mine or yours?' On Fisher replying that it was Mr. Wilding's, the latter picked up a little rook-rifle, loaded quickly, and just as I was about to swallow my first spoonful of soup, fired behind my back at a blackbird that was sitting on the lawn. The bullet reached its mark more truly than my soup, for the bird was laid low, and I subsided into chokings and splutterings. Apparently Mr. Wilding and Fisher had a permanent competition—what is sometimes called at golf clubs a 'running

bogey.' The rule was that whenever a blackbird appeared on the lawn, one shilling was staked on its existence, and each took alternate shots. The bird in question lost its life and left Mr. Wilding five up in the series.

"The Wildings' home is very picturesque, and among other useful attributes possesses an artesian well, from which flow the waters of a delightful open-air plunge-bath. The bath was nicely paved, and the water seemed the clearest and most sparkling in the world, so that on a warm morning to come down in pyjamas and dressing-gown for a plunge before dressing was a delightful experience. With Mr. Wilding and his son I turned out on one of the mornings of my stay, and enjoyed the short dip. But on this occasion a little shooting took place before we bathed. Young Wilding was very keen for his father to go into a large netted enclosure and put an end to various marauding blackbirds, which had entered the place for the last time in search of a fruit

diet. After several of the robbers had been killed, the bathing took place, enjoyed by neither of us more than by Mr. Wilding, who entered into the sport of the morning's fun with the keenness of a boy.

" And I shall always remember the tennis on the Sunday afternoon. Anthony always called it ' patters,' probably owing to the friendly nature of the contests that took place on that day at Mr. Wilding's court. We saw a good single after lunch, when Gordon Lowe just managed to owe 40 to Mr. Wilding; while later on there was another sporting game, when Gordon Lowe and I tried to owe heavy odds to Mr. Wilding and Mr. Butterworth, an old friend of the family, whose association with lawn tennis dated back to the days of the Renshaws.

" Not until the day we left Christchurch did I discover that Miss Cora Wilding was quite skilful with her pencil. Gordon Lowe, a good subject apparently, had already sat to her, with results equally pleasing to

sitter and artist. Now Fisher was giving up at least fifteen minutes of his valuable time while she dashed off a speaking likeness of New Zealand's one and only tennis-playing Cabinet Minister. The nose and chin were there, but the expression was not his. As the artist remarked, 'he had a different one before I asked him to sit for me.'

"I left at Christchurch the kindest-hearted lady and one of the most charming men it has ever been my fortune to meet."

Anthony had two sisters and two brothers. Gladys, the eldest of the family, was an accomplished girl, who won a gold medal for a brilliant literary essay on the Indian Mutiny; her death in England some seven years ago cut short a career of much promise.

Frank, six years junior to Anthony, is a member of his father's firm. Soon after war broke out, with the full approval of his parents—to whom the gift of two sons

to the Empire must have been a wrench, though neither hesitated to make it—he obtained a commission in the Howitzer Battery of the New Zealand Field Artillery —as fine a corps of men as the Dominion, its manhood so splendidly vindicated at Anzac, has dispatched to the Front. He left for Egypt early in July last year, and later went to Gallipoli.

I had the pleasure of meeting Frank when he came over to Europe in 1913. Though shorter than Anthony and less powerfully built, though more restrained and conventional, he bore a striking resemblance, physically and mentally, to his brother. He had the same sturdy, well-developed frame, the same clear, open countenance crowned by fair hair, the same blue, trusting eyes, the same clean mind and unsophisticated nature. He had, too, some of Anthony's idiosyncrasies. A lawn-tennis player of advancing promise—he has followed in his father's footsteps by winning the doubles championship of New

Zealand—Frank was a modest competitor during his visit at some of the open meetings at which his brother was the "big gun."

Two little incidents at the Manchester tournament flash through my mind. Frank was wanted to go into court; his name came through the megaphone to the tea-tent. Instantly he rose from the table, removed his heavy coat, and threw it gently on the lap of the lady champion (he would have placed it on the Queen's lap without offending her), thrust a piece of seed cake into his trousers' pocket, picked up his brother's racket, dived through the crowd outside, and made a bee-line for the court indicated. That was the Wilding way. Some competitors would have given themselves at least ten minutes' grace, and then walked leisurely to the dressing-room to "make themselves pretty."

The second episode was on the final day when Anthony, on a wet court and in half a gale of wind, was waging a desperate

five-set match with Parke, fresh from his great triumph over Brookes in Melbourne. Anthony rarely encumbered his feet with steel points; he disliked them, and as a rule wore the "gym" shoe, leaving a trail of this cheap footgear over Europe after him. But the match was not going well for him; he could not stem the rushing tide of Parke's drives; he wanted a firmer grip. "Got any points, Frank?" he said to his brother, who was sitting with Beamish and me near the umpire's chair. Frank instantly produced a pair from his overcoat pocket, and, in less time than it takes to write this sentence, had whipped off the "gym" shoes and shod Anthony in steel. Then he quietly resumed his seat. No fuss; no "brotherly advice" during the interval. Anticipating Anthony's dilemma, he had gone quietly into the dressing-room and borrowed—or perhaps temporarily appropriated—a likely fit. Frank must have made a good soldier. There is force of character, quick resource-

fulness, behind his somewhat shy demeanour. And he gave up a lucrative position at the New Zealand Bar to go into the great fight.

Mention has already been made of Cora, the second daughter, who visited England recently, and of Edwyn, the baby of the family—a fine, strong boy, who fishes and shoots with his father's zeal, motor-cycles as keenly as Anthony was wont, and is something better than useful at lawn tennis.

Frederick Wilding did not concentrate all his thoughts on his profession and his family. His ripe wisdom was sought and his good influence felt in many an enterprise which had as its object the physical development of the Dominion people. Directly and indirectly he has helped to maintain that quality of bodily fitness and that faculty of mental alertness which, springing from the pursuit of games and outdoor exercise, have proved of such inestimable value in recent military opera-

tions. Who shall deny that when Frederick Wilding initiated the scheme for providing Christchurch with Lancaster Park, equipped with cricket and football grounds, cycle track and swimming-bath, he did not enlist a regiment of splendid Empire soldiers ?

Both Mr. and Mrs. Wilding have simple, homely tastes. They hate pomp and circumstance ; they have no social ambitions ; you could never dream of calling them snobs. Mr. Wilding is happiest in an old pair of flannel trousers and a flannel shirt open at the throat. Thus attired he will do a morning's gardening or fruit picking, and be quite fresh for four or five sets of tennis and a swim after lunch, followed by more gardening, and a game of billiards after supper.

In the summer you will often find him without socks on his feet; sometimes he does not put them on when he drives out on a motoring errand. The Wilding boys may be said to have been brought up on bare feet. They never wore stockings, and

very often did not wear shoes in their childhood. That is why, I do not doubt, Anthony rarely suffered, if he suffered at all, from sore feet after weeks of hard play. The muscles of his feet and legs were so hardened in youth that they stood almost any strain—even the strain of pushing a motor-cycle along an infamous foreign road for many a weary mile. They were surface-proof, and exactly what that factor meant to him in lawn tennis no one can estimate.

Ever young in heart, Frederick Wilding had a keen sense of humour. At supper one evening, after some strenuous matches on the home court, somebody was expatiating upon the terrific break service of young McLoughlin, a recent Davis Cup visitor to Christchurch.

"Why," said the host quietly, "that's nothing! I remember a New Zealander playing here one day who broke the ball so wide that I had to climb a pear-tree to make the return."

"You lost the ace?" asked a guest incautiously.

"Not at all," replied Wilding *père*, still quite solemn. "I lobbed very high to give myself time to climb down the tree and get back into court, and then we went on for ten minutes until my opponent fouled the net!"

And of Mrs. Wilding? She is a woman of superabundant energy. The first up in the morning, she is the last to go to bed at night. Whatever her hand finds to do, that she does with all her might. Nothing ever ruffles her; from her, there is little question, Anthony inherited his serenity of disposition as well as his power of concentration. She has an infallible regard for method and detail. A devoted mother, she conceived the idea of taking an annual photograph of each member of the family in their "growing years," and of inscribing under each print the height and weight of the original. She delighted in such records. When attending a cricket match she invariably kept the score, recording every

MRS. WILDING.

ball bowled as if she were the official scorer. Her scrapbooks have already been mentioned. No success of her husband or her sons in the realm of sport ever escaped her; she followed Anthony's career with intense enthusiasm. She has ever been, and remains, a great correspondent, keeping regularly in touch with links in the old country, and never neglecting to write a letter to New Zealand friends who might be temporarily absent. It is a small thing, scarcely worth mentioning, but Mrs. Wilding has never failed to send me a line of goodwill at Christmas. And Anthony's mother keeps herself well posted in international and political developments. You have only to read her letters to realise that she is a woman of intense patriotism, broad outlook and sound judgment.

These are but fragmentary and incomplete impressions of the Wilding home, but they may help to estimate the environment and forces which influenced, if they did not actually control, Anthony's life.

III

BOYHOOD IN NEW ZEALAND

THE qualities which were to distinguish Anthony in after life—physical sturdiness, courage, frankness, mobility—revealed themselves prominently in boyhood. He was a very strong, healthy baby. All through the nursery era he was tremendously active and invariably happy. When six months old his mother wrote in her diary, "I think he will have a great deal of character and determination, and very high spirits." On the first anniversary of his birth she added, "Darling sonny is so well, I really believe he will do something great some day. He has such a decided little character already, and is so immensely vigorous and strong in every way." He was brave in that second year too. To be

covered with bruises and scratches seemed to be his normal state, but he never complained. A tumble or hurt never prevented him from doing that upon which his mind was set. When he was two years old his mother, then staying at Dunedin, wrote in her diary, "He is such a darling boy, and I am so immensely proud of him. They call him little Hercules here. He is so splendid in physique, so sturdy, and yet so sweet and affectionate." Falls he never minded, and when hurt, before he could talk plainly, he would always say, unless the trouble were *very* bad, "No mattee (matter), thanks."

To all manner of games and outdoor sports he was addicted as soon as he could run. His father was a perfect mentor, taking an unflagging interest in Anthony's early development. In April, 1888, the late A. E. Stoddart came to New Zealand with Vernon's cricket team, and visited the Wildings' home. Anthony made great friends with him. Mr. Stoddart bowled to

AGE FIFTEEN MONTHS.

AGE FOUR YEARS.

him, and showed him how to hold the bat. His father was then playing in all the interprovincial matches, usually as captain, and visiting teams always came to Fownhope. Among others who were attracted by Anthony was F. R. Spofforth.

From those early years at Christchurch—years of perennial sunshine and physical development, of feats of muscular daring and of training in sportsmanship under the best influences—Anthony gained inestimable benefit. At the age of four he climbed to the top of a big pine-tree, about sixty feet high, in the garden. His mother had a great fright when she found him, but he was quite equal to the task of descending safely. That he was a boy of resource is shown by the fact, recalled by a playmate, that he put pieces of wood inside his stockings to protect his legs from the chastisement of a governess. He was always a great climber, and at the age of six had explored every crevice of the roof. He was a good walker too, and

before he was seven went for walks of thirteen miles without showing any distress. When just seven he swam the length of the swimming-bath, forty-five feet, receiving five shillings from his father in acknowledgment of the feat. The bath had only been made about a month, so he learnt quickly. At the same age he had his first bicycle, and learnt to ride very quickly.

When he was eight, Anthony's father bought him a pony. He soon rode bareback and any way, although Jack was rather frisky and he had several tumbles. Always original in his forms of amusement, he conceived the idea of using an old dust-bin which ran on wooden wheels as a carriage. The pony was hitched up to the bin by harness adopted on the spot, and for many months Anthony used to drive into town in this equipage and visit his friends. The wheels were low and made a rumbling noise, heralding his approach. On one occasion, when his father was

playing an important tennis match some two or three miles from Fownhope, he carried the parental kit in state to the ground, the arrival of the dust-bin drawing the cheers of the crowd.

None of the Wilding children in their early days wore shoes or stockings. "I can almost hear the echo of dismal howls," Anthony afterwards recalled, "which accompanied the production of footgear when we paid a visit to town. Sandals were unknown to us, and glass had to be very sharp to make any impression."

Horseflesh always attracted him. Even before he could ride, the Wildings' man let him get on a big horse and go out on the road. When the horse began to gallop, Anthony had a bad spill, but was fortunately not much hurt. He was devoted to dogs; a spaniel named Carlo was a great favourite. His parents had a victoria, and Anthony loved to sit on the box with the man. When he was nine he drove it himself, and Mrs. Wilding tells me that she

felt perfectly safe with him. Indeed, after eight he rode and drove a great deal. Horses were his boon companions.

A long and fatiguing ride in no way daunted him. At eleven he rode on Jack to Corwar station, fifty miles from Opawa, where Mr. Cathcart Wason, M.P., was then living. It was the first of many pleasant visits. He left home at eight o'clock in the morning, missed his way, and did not arrive until three hours after dark. "He did not seem a bit tired after his long ride," the Wasons wrote to his mother. Shortly after this he took out Athole the horse and Jack his pony from the stable, and harnessed them tandem to the spring cart, using rope for harness. With Jack as leader he drove off into the country, passing through Christchurch on the way. His mother was horrified, and never expected to see him back safely; but he returned, thoroughly pleased with the expedition—by no means his first essay at driving tandem in this way.

AGE THIRTEEN (ON "JACK").

Although devoted to and proficient at all games, beginning cricket and football early, Anthony showed a wide catholicity towards all pastimes. The Wildings had a small boat on the river, at the foot of their grounds; in this he was very fond of rowing. On stilts he could go quite fast backwards, and he learnt roller-skating on the asphalt tennis court.

Anthony was sent to Mr. Wilson's school in Cranmer Square, Christchurch, for three years. He covered the four miles from Fownhope on his bicycle, strapping his books to the handle-bars. To outsiders he appeared somewhat shy and modest; but he attracted universal attention by his face and figure. Like every true Colonial, he threw himself with great zeal into school cricket and football, shining at both. At the age of twelve he was elected captain of the football team, and made his first 100 [1] at cricket two days after his fourteenth birthday, when batting for Mr.

[1] 126 not out.

Wilson's school against Christchurch High School. Not a very strong eleven was opposed to him, but his parents were delighted. The home cricket pitch and his father's coaching enabled him to advance rapidly, and he became quite a useful bowler, medium paced, with an off break. Not infrequently as a boy he played for Lancaster Park in the same team as his father ; he also played for Canterbury, and, in a match against Auckland, scored twenty-eight and took three wickets for twenty-two runs.

Shooting and fishing, too, Anthony began very young. He used to go out on the hills at the back of Fownhope. Mrs. Wilding has records, when he was twelve and thirteen, of Anthony bringing back "five rabbits," "four hares," "ten trout," etc. In the holidays he usually camped out in the bush or on the hills with his boy friends. They would shoot and fish, generally in the company of Jack, and Carlo the dog. Some pheasants, quail, teal, swans, and a

few other odds and ends came their way; then there was the brown trout, frequently caught up to ten pounds. They would sometimes sleep by day and fish by night, as do so many other sportsmen in that paradise of sport. As to rabbits, Anthony once declared, "I have stood at sunset in the dry river bed, and, gazing at the steep shingle facings, seen the sloping cliffs literally moving with rabbits; in fact, there have been more rabbits than cliff, giving the effect of the land itself being alive."

Another boyhood incident relates to his winning a first prize offered for a boy's pony at the agricultural show. Anthony rode Jack, and for two or three weeks before the show took immense pains in grooming and getting him into condition.

All through his boyhood and schooldays Anthony was remarkably strong and well. He never had an illness; a very mild attack of measles and whooping-cough were his only complaints. Even as a child he went in for physical exercises during the

winter. He had a very strong will and great determination, and was sometimes a little difficult to manage; but he was very affectionate, and from babyhood "had a way with him that people could not resist." He always preferred games to lessons, but in spite of that kept an average place in school, and his master, Mr. Wilson, said he had plenty of ability. Very fond of music, he took lessons for a few terms; but there was great difficulty about his practice, which had to be done out of school hours.

His first lessons at lawn tennis were taken on his father's courts, used, by climatic good fortune, all the year round. The Sunday afternoon gatherings at Fownhope, to which reference has already been made, were traditional. At them many a member of international cricket teams made his lawn tennis début. On the Saturday Frederick Wilding would bowl for New Zealand in a public match; the following afternoon his victims would be enjoying tennis or bowls or perhaps merely a quiet

chat at the Wilding home. Often the bishop looked in to smoke a pipe of peace behind the court. In the hard-working communities of the Dominion hours for recreation are scarce; private exercise on a Sunday afternoon is not publicly vetoed.

At first Anthony had to content himself with the rôle of ball-boy at these Sunday gatherings; indeed, he regarded scouting for his father as a great honour, something to dream about at night. But there came a red-letter day when the fourth player was late, and a substitute was required. "You can imagine my excitement," said Anthony, who was then fourteen. He was a little anxious, however. "My double faults never failed to evoke enthusiasm on the part of my father. He was always very fair in admonishing; any excusable mistake went unnoticed, but a double fault or the missing of a 'sitter' never failed to bring forth 'Boy, what are you doing?' and a somewhat lengthy homily on the enormity of my offence."

To his gain, let it be said that Anthony, even in later years, when he could have given his father thirty, always accepted the paternal advice in sport with marked respect. His father was his first coach, and certainly his best. Frederick Wilding inculcated other things besides strokes and tactics.

Father and son often played together in doubles in New Zealand, reaching the final of the national championship on one occasion; and they paired at one or two Continental meetings when Anthony "conducted" his father on a lightning tour in 1906. Though a sound and inspiring coach, the style of the father was very different from that of the son. Mr. Wilding's game, though canny, was old-fashioned. He was a safe rather than a brilliant player. On the other hand, Anthony, in his boyhood, was chiefly known for his powerful forehand topped drive. In acquiring this stroke he was probably influenced by watching H. A. Parker, who became New

Zealand champion when Anthony was twelve. In those early days the future champion was certainly not an all-round player, nor did he become so until after many years of exacting training.

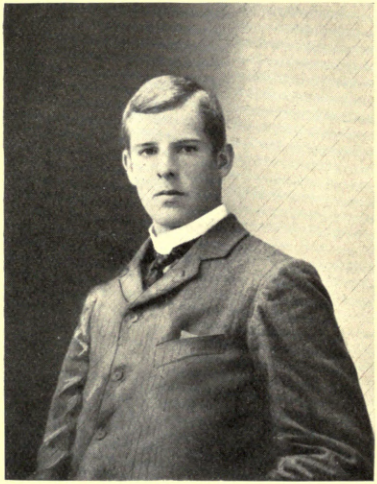
Almost adjacent to Mr. Wilson's school in Christchurch were the courts of the Cranmer Square Club, and here it was that Anthony won his first championship—that of the Province of Canterbury. His opponent in the final, curiously enough, was his father's old partner, R. D. Harman, who had held the title for seven consecutive years and was then a veteran. "I was then seventeen," said Anthony, "and had trained as if for a Marathon race during the previous six weeks.[1] The match was a very long one. All five sets were played; it was the long walks over the

[1] At the back of Fownhope was a track up the hills about 2½ miles long and rising to about 1,000 ft. Two or three first-class runners, in training for an athletic meeting, used to take this track at top speed. Anthony waited for them at the bottom and stuck to them right to the summit of the hill.

hills that pulled me through. No doubt this very early demonstration of the absolute necessity of physical fitness for winning important matches gave me a lesson I have never since forgotten." That this modest dictum was true his career in the courts proves. Anthony did not regard physical training as a fetish; he thought of it as a primal necessity of life. To him the unfit body was unthinkable.

But while he was winning local lawn tennis championships, Anthony kept an open mind and a ready hand for other games. Indeed, when he was at Mr. Wilson's school and subsequently, he gave to cricket most of his time and attention. Probably his father's fame and example had some influence. Nevertheless, his lawn tennis enthusiasm was gradually mounting. When Anthony was eighteen, a Victorian team, headed by A. W. Dunlop, visited Christchurch. The New Zealand players gave them an excellent run, and Dunlop only won the singles after a five-set

AGE SIXTEEN.
(On Right.)



AGE NINETEEN.
(Just before leaving Christchurch for Cambridge.)

A CAMPING-OUT EXPEDITION IN THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS.

match with one of the Dominion's best men, F. M. B. Fisher, whom I have previously mentioned. This contest naturally filled Anthony's mind and fired his zeal. Soon after he was promoted to the first-class handicap singles, and with plus 15 managed to win. He also won two other handicaps; but his tournament experience in New Zealand before he came to England was comparatively small.

After he had left Mr. Wilson's school Anthony had lessons with a tutor, and passed his matriculation in 1901. He then went to Canterbury College in Christchurch for about six months, ostensibly for Latin prose and mathematics. But he was not a very ardent student. As he himself puts it, "My irregularity at lectures was in a measure compensated for by my zest on behalf of the University at lawn tennis and Rugby football."

That the Wildings should decide to send their eldest son to Cambridge was natural. Mr. Wilding was educated in England; both

he and Mrs. Wilding had many ties on this side. Anxious that Anthony should enter the profession of the law, the father deemed a visit home of first-class importance. Accordingly, in the year 1902, Anthony was put on board a big vessel, carrying a hundred thousand carcasses of frozen mutton and three other passengers besides himself : [1]

"I had to defeat the examiners of the 'Little Go' at Cambridge in Greek, a language quite dead in New Zealand, and as I knew nothing about St. Mark's Gospel in Greek, or Latin prose, my parents deemed it wise to pack me round with Greek books so that I might work out my own salvation. It took the good ship *Delphic* six solid weeks to fetch Teneriffe. The only land we saw was St. Paul's Rock, about 2,000 miles from the main land. We struck a real gale off Cape Horn; all the boats forward were smashed, and for a whole

[1] *On the Court and Off* (Methuen).

night and day we had to half-steam ahead against the hurricane, which was accompanied by fine sleet and frozen rain. While the gale was on our quarter, the bridge, on which I was allowed to stand most of my time, frequently touched water."

That storm off Cape Horn never faded from his memory, and probably explains why for ever after he had a repugnance for the sea.

Anthony's first visit to London provided nothing but disillusionment. And on the journey westward from the Docks, if St. Paul's and the Law Courts had not come to his rescue, all his previous conceptions of the capital would have seemed mythical. Fortunately a policeman on point duty in the Strand was a novelty; he put down the window of his cab in order to miss nothing. His fellow-passenger, a prospective student for Edinburgh University, was also a stranger to London. That night these two ventured into the promenade of

one of the large music-halls. Anthony has left a memory behind : " I was not so much impressed with what went on on the stage as with the varied types of humanity and the complete indifference of the women to most of the items of the programme." I cannot imagine that the atmosphere of that place appealed to him.

IV

CAMBRIDGE

BEFORE going up to Cambridge Anthony went to a cramming institution at Hunstanton, presided over by Mr. Hayter. There were a number of excellent courts, and a good deal of tennis was played. "At first," he writes, "I was very nervous. I feared lest my poor colonial game might show up badly against seasoned home players; but I need not have had any qualms. Mr. Hayter was far ahead of all his pupils, and I found I had considerably overestimated the powers of my comrades. Indeed, I had quite a shock after we had played a few games. Mr. Hayter told me that I should certainly be selected for the University. It was a great compliment, though he qualified it by adding that the

average Blue was rather a duffer." And so it proved, for Anthony won the Freshmen's tournament in a canter. One of his routed opponents was F. G. Lowe.

The first summer at Cambridge was devoted almost exclusively to cricket. Trinity had an exceptionally strong eleven, including no less than seven Blues, and they were rather too strong for the other colleges. That fact, however, did not spoil the fun. F. B. Wilson was captain when Anthony first came up, and gave him his Crusader blazer—subsequently to win so much glory on the lawn tennis court, for it was his favourite and lucky coat for several years. If the cricket talent at Cambridge had not been unusually strong at this period, it is conceivable that Anthony would have ultimately got his Blue and concentrated his energies on that game. Perhaps his father would have been the better pleased. But the world would have lost a lawn tennis champion.

The lawn tennis executive at Cambridge

had been "nibbling," Joffre-like, at Anthony for some time, and in his second year they induced him to become their honorary secretary. The University Club, if not on the shoals at that period, was in low water. Its courts were unsatisfactory; financially there was an ominous deficit. To breathe new life into the club, to reorganise it, to raise its prestige, became Anthony's ambition. One of his first ideas was to arrange that the All England match should be included in the May Week programme, and to advertise the innovation widely. His two years' *régime* was so successful that not only was the entire debt wiped out, but a substantial balance provided. He has himself referred to these days:

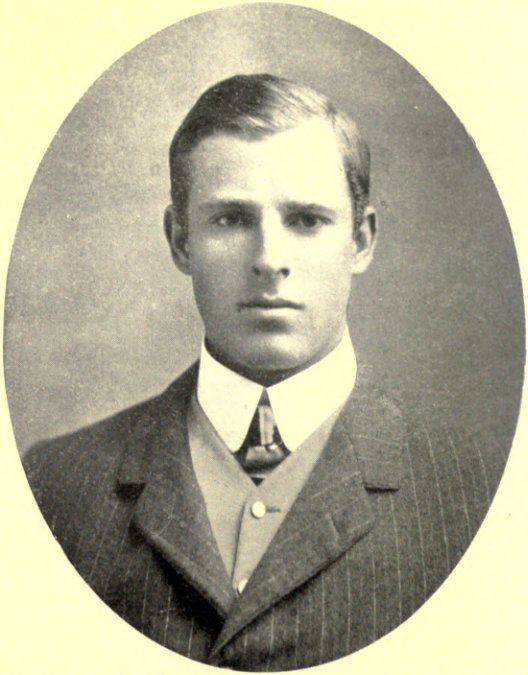
"We rented a ground which was neither very large nor possessed very good turf. We played two or three 'Varsity matches a week, and gained about seventeen wins against two losses. The University teams,

I need not point out, vary enormously both as regards standard of play and keenness of individuals. Not only was our team of 1905 [1] very useful on the court, but we all pulled together for it, and trained hard. We were keen enough to indulge in systematic stroke practice. My partner was Kenneth Powell,[2] then a freshman, and, if I remember rightly, the only match we lost during the season was against the Dohertys. . . . To ensure getting the very best available team I had a number of trials. For instance, it would come to my ears that a certain pair who had done excellent work in club matches thought they could beat the 'Varsity third pair. The 'Varsity third pair would be equally confident of their own superiority. So a friendly match would be arranged, and if five shillings were laid, I offered no objection. By this method

[1] A. F. W. was then captain both of the Trinity and University Clubs.

[2] Killed at the Front while serving as a private in the H.A.C., in February, 1915.

KENNETH POWELL (H.A.C.), HIS CAMBRIDGE PARTNER.



Photo] [Stearn.

AGE TWENTY-TWO: CAPTAIN OF THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY L.T.C.

my third pair always earned their place on merit. Of course the result of these matches was not conclusive, but it aided the task of selection."

The late Kenneth Powell, writing [1] of his association with Anthony at Cambridge, was immensely impressed with his captain's energy and enterprise. Indeed, he instances Anthony as the most remarkable example of how quickly a man may improve by putting his mind into the game :

" He used to be continuously thinking out some new point, and before each match began insisted on practising with me in a quiet court for half an hour or so—first his forehand drive, then his service, then a series of lobs. To this persistent battery I had to respond as well as I could, with the result that he improved his game out of all knowledge during the season and brought me along with him. From being a mere tyro I learnt to keep up my own end in our

[1] *Fifty Years of Sport* (Southwood).

matches sufficiently well to enable us to beat all our opponents except the Dohertys and the Allens."

Anthony never did things by halves. Whether organising lawn tennis at Cambridge, consolidating his own game, training for the championship, winning a long and exhausting match, preparing for a motor-cycle tour across Europe, inspecting an aeroplane, shooting in Hungary, or reconnoitring under fire for a gun position in Flanders, the whole of an alert mind was concentrated on the job in hand. An illustration of his zeal at Cambridge may be mentioned. In order that lawn tennis might not end its season with the summer, he enlisted the interest of the municipal authorities and improvised a court in the Corn Exchange. Here many friendly games and even matches were played during the winter—after, by his initiative, the remnants of the vegetable market had been carefully removed.

It was in this indoor arena, and using one of the brick walls, that he set about the painful and difficult task of anglicising his own backhand drive. When he came over from New Zealand he brought with him the ungainly stroke used by the majority of colonial players—that is to say, both on the forehand and backhand he hit the ball with the same face of the racket, the elbow was bent forward and skyward. Pace, top spin, and a deceptive flight were provided, but the style was cramped and had serious disadvantages when the player was tucked up in the backhand corner. Anthony's colonial backhand was weighed and found wanting by English mentors, among whom were Mahony and H. L. Doherty. On their advice he reconstructed it. The new stroke required hours of daily practice and no little self-discipline, but eventually he conquered—to the great improvement of his game.

As over other communities into which

he entered, Anthony exerted a marked influence over those Cambridge undergraduates with whom he was thrown into contact. Not only did he foster in all of them a greater zest for, and a greater thoroughness in, their games, but morally and physically he set a high standard. It was impossible to be in touch with so buoyant and sanguine a temperament without taking a broader outlook on life, without gaining greater confidence in the daily task, however small. It is true that his exuberance sometimes overflowed, his colonial frankness sometimes embarrassed; but there was never an atom of malice in his banter. For example, it was said that the Allen twins, an ever-popular fraternity anchored in Cambridge during May term, deprecated the sudden advent of Anthony into their rooms, and—in order to procure their immediate presence on the court—the shying of loaves of bread or a stray cushion at their inoffensive heads. Perhaps "deprecate" is too strong a word.

In the first place, the Allens were so good-natured they would always oblige; in the second place, Anthony had a way with him that nobody could resist.

Physically his inspiration at Cambridge must have been considerable. When a man exhibits an endurance and a hardihood far superior to his fellows, when competition in sport is very keen, the secret of success is eagerly hunted out. When Anthony's companions saw that he never smoked, never drank strong liquor, never abused his system, and indulged in long training walks, it is not surprising that his cult should have found many disciples. Who shall deny that the seed so unconsciously sown by this apostle of physical fitness, this captain of games, did not bear fruit when the great challenge came a few years later? I am reminded of what a French Cabinet Minister said to me at St. Cloud in the month before Germany sent her ultimatum to France. He was a patron of sport, and had been watching

Anthony win the Hard Court Championship of the World :

"I only wish all our young men would train as Wilding does. Many of them in this club, fired by his example, have added at least five years to their lives since they began to use the punch-ball, run on the track, and eschew late hours at cafés. We in France have always envied the British method of physical training, of inculcating discipline by games. In a sudden emergency, such as the mobilisation of our young manhood, this factor would be of supreme value. Would that we had a hundred thousand Wildings in Paris!"

I have often thought of that pronouncement since, especially when meeting the first batch of wounded Anzac heroes who had taken part in that frenzied storming of Gallipoli.

From Captain Oscar Dixon,[1] of the

[1] A son of Mr. Joseph Dixon, of Sheffield, at whose

Lincolnshire Regiment, who was at Trinity with Anthony, I have received the following note :

" It was in October, 1902, when he came up to Cambridge, that I first met Anthony Wilding. He had rooms in New Court, ornamented with the famous ' Lone Tree,' clinging to which one night a certain undergraduate yelled out in desperation, ' Help ! I am lost in a big forest ! '

" Anthony started his career by playing conspicuously as inside three-quarter in the Freshman's Rugger match. The following summer he played and got his colours for Trinity Cricket XI. Of his active connection with University lawn tennis, which he found at a low ebb and considered a very second-rate pastime, you are doubtless well acquainted. By advertising all the matches, charging an entrance fee, and securing such distinguished players

house A. F. W. frequently stayed. It was while a guest of Mr. Dixon's that he played in his first open tournament in England.

as the Doherty brothers to come up and oppose the 'Varsity, he made the game highly popular among the undergraduates. One cannot speak too highly of his enthusiasm and influence.

"The following year he could probably have secured his cricket Blue if he had only stuck to the game.[1] He also played Rugby for Trinity; the followers of that game were among his best pals at the University.

"Few people would credit him with working hard, but, exercising his powers of concentration, he got through a good deal, and did very well at his law examination. There was only one thing that worried him, and that was mathematics; but two of his friends managed to pull him through all his obstacles.[2]

[1] Actually he was never offered his cricket Blue. With colonial determination, he concentrated on the task of raising the standard of efficiency of lawn tennis. The popularity of the game shows his success.

[2] A story current that A. F. W. chaffed his examiners good-humouredly and thus enlisted their sympathies is doubtless mythical.

"Tact and consistency were two of his prominent features, and his physical fitness was always a matter for public comment. No matter how high he soared in his achievements, he never forgot his old friends, and was always true to them.

"There was a certain ingenuousness about his personality which could not fail to appeal. I recall how amused he was after his first term, when going away for the Christmas vacation, that his bedmaker, having carefully packed his handbag, should tell him that she 'had got a few things together to see him home.' Nothing would persuade her that Tony could not get half-way home during the vacation.

"Of course we had the usual college 'rags.' I remember on one occasion the members of the Scottish schools collected in a friend's room which was on the same staircase as Tony's. Suddenly one of the party went to the window, then another, and then another; but not a word was

spoken. Then, of course, there was a stampede. One man fell sprawling over a cold tub. Regaining his feet, he picked up the tub promptly and threw the contents out of the window, which was on the fifth floor, on to a pair below, who had been the objects of interest. The action was reported to the police as an assault, and they got to know the names of three occupants of the room, a Scotsman, a Yorkshireman, and Wilding. A detective inspector was put on the job to try to find out the name of the man who threw the water. He interviewed all three without the least result. Afterwards he met Tony in the court, and said to him: 'You are Mr. ——. I want to see you.' The officer's face was a study when Tony replied, 'I thought you said you were a detective. You have interviewed me once already.' Whereupon the police gave up their quest in disgust, and handed the case over to the college authorities, who inflicted a nominal punishment.

"Anthony was a great believer in physical fitness, as you know, and went long training walks every Sunday. He was also a great sticker in eradicating faults by constant practice. He spent hours improving his weak strokes against a high wall. I shall never forget when he came back to our house at Sheffield from Newport, Monmouthshire, where, after a great match, he had just got the better of Holcombe Ward in a Davis Cup tie.[1] He was very puzzled by the American's service, and, after working it out on paper all one night, took two dozen balls on to our court the next day, and put his theories into practice—much to my exhaustion, for I was fielding for him. After hitting me very hard in various places, and losing a dozen balls, some going 200 yards into the village, he found a practical solution, as his future opponents found out to their cost. That was an illustration of how he set out to master difficulties.

[1] He won the fifth set at 8–6.

"He once challenged a friend to a match on our court, agreeing to use only a cricket-bat—and very nearly won, which shows the marvellous power of his wrist."

Another episode associated with Anthony's career at Cambridge related to the visit of the Racing Club de France, who came to play Trinity at Rugby football. Here is an account in his own words.[1]

"Some of our players were crocked, so we borrowed a few 'Blues' from the other colleges. The match was a splendid one, and we lost by a single point. My memories of it are painful, as I played all through the second spell with a dislocated third finger which gave me hell. Decugis, the French lawn tennis champion, was running up and down the touch-line in a huge state of excitement.

"Ranking very little less in public importance to the match was the dinner.

[1] *On the Court and Off.*

Two lecture-rooms had been knocked into one in the Trinity Great Court, and I well remember the brains and energy expended in choosing the ménu and in making arrangements for what was to be, for Trinity at any rate, a historic occasion. At the dinner, as can be imagined, the *entente cordiale* theme was very prominent. Afterwards we discovered a little four-wheeled coach used for conveying the Master of Trinity's guests from the lodge to his house. This little vehicle was soon filled—roof and all—with our guests, and was raced round the quadrangle wobbling in a most alarming manner. The result was inevitable: a curb was struck, and in a very few seconds Frenchmen, academical gowns, bits of coach were all wallowing on the floor.

"A rush was then made for the brakes waiting to convey our visitors to the station, as some of them had to get the train to London and Paris. However, we were exactly one hour too late for the last train,

so the entire company adjourned to the theatre. Our advent was greeted with prolonged cheers and with a supreme disregard for the performance. Many impassioned speeches were made, and continued to be made throughout the evening. One burly Frenchman, making more noise than all the rest put together, was threatened by a frail-looking 'chucker-out.' Very slowly and very gravely he stood up on his seat, and, thumping a huge chest, addressed the entire house in a solemn voice, glancing significantly meanwhile at the little man. 'I am ze champion of all ze French az ze box,' he began. This was greeted with vociferous applause, and the 'chucker-out' somehow sank out of sight. It was very difficult to keep the audience off the stage. I'm afraid we were all rather irresponsible."

During his summer vacations Anthony did a round of English tournaments, extending his programme each year and winning many prizes. Of his career at

Wimbledon I shall have something to say in a subsequent chapter, but one may note here that he first visited the All England ground in 1903, and saw H. S. Mahony playing, as was his custom, in borrowed and ill-assorted socks. The very next year he was himself a competitor at Wimbledon, and found to his great amusement that his opponent in the second round was the man with the odd socks! Much to his delight he captured a set, and made Mahony talk to himself a great deal.

While still an undergraduate, Anthony won the Scottish championship at Moffat. Also, when only nineteen, he competed at Newcastle and had the great distinction of beating two such seasoned campaigners as C. H. Martin and W. V. Eaves, only falling to S. H. Smith after a very close match. While at Cambridge, Anthony made his first appearance for Australasia in the International championship.

Anthony was no duffer in the schools at Cambridge. He passed both parts of the

general examination in 1904, tackling the final examination of the law special. He passed both parts of his Bar examination in April, 1905, and in May he passed his final examination for B.A., taking second class in Roman History and third class in the other part. His parents had expected him to pass only one part in May, and the final in October; they were very pleased at his being successful in both. Anthony renounced his visits and tennis, and worked really hard for some months for these examinations. His mother had a congratulatory letter from Mr. J. D. Duff, his tutor at Trinity, speaking very highly of him, and saying that he should miss him, and that he was deservedly popular with every one

V

THE LAW AND LAWN TENNIS

WHEN he left Cambridge, Anthony had every intention of "making good" in the law. His father had an old-established legal practice in New Zealand, and desired, quite naturally, that his eldest son should enter the profession to which his education had been directed, and in which his interests appeared to lie. This programme, provisionally mapped out in the minds of both his parents and himself, was confirmed when Anthony reported himself and his developed manhood at Christchurch in 1906. During that brief sojourn, we may note, he won the New Zealand championship, decided that year at his native town —a title he subsequently secured twice. It was arranged that Anthony should

qualify first for the English Bar, and then for the New Zealand Bar—and there was some talk of the possibility of a future political career in the Dominion.

It says something for Anthony's powers of concentration, and for his devotion to his father, for whom he always had a profound respect, that, despite his inherent passion for sport and outdoor pursuits, despite the manifold gaieties and distractions offered and accepted at tennis tournaments at home and abroad, he should have faithfully discharged the obligation imposed. Boy-like, he chafed at the business of keeping chambers, eating dinners, and swotting at law-books in the Inner Temple, but he never kicked over the traces, and got safely through his examinations.

That his thoughts at this time were more centred on lawn tennis than the law, that he was more concerned with generating speed on his motor-bicycle from one Continental resort to another than with advancing to the eminence and dignity of a pros-

perous barrister, I have not the slightest doubt. Indeed, I frankly admit that our conversations and correspondence at this period touched but vaguely on the future. Anthony never built a bridge to meet trouble; he invariably lived in the present; the shadows of life rarely crossed his path. He supposed that one day he would go back to New Zealand and settle down there as an obscure ornament of the legal profession. That was the "old governor's" wish, and was, of course, to be respected. Besides, the "old governor" had been such a good sportsman in allowing him to make a bid for the championship, and incidentally to see Europe under such genial conditions.

And what delightful conditions they were! Perennial sunshine, congenial society, good food, and the best of appetites, new places and fresh faces, enough exercise to keep the body fit and the mind unclogged, the excitement of competition, and, in Anthony's case, the fascination of power

—even with a racket—and of the popular applause which acclaimed it. With Europe enveloped in a black cloud at the present day, it is difficult to think of carnivals of sport on the Continent; but their memory is not less sweet because the prospect of renewal is so remote.

I recall particularly Anthony's first visit to Monte Carlo, some ten springs ago. To that shrine of cosmopolitan fashion he brought no conventional homage, no trunkful of fine clothes, no fever for gambling. He enjoyed every hour of his stay. But as few hours as possible were spent in the enervating atmosphere of the pleasure halls; none of them were fortified by artificial stimulant. His were the zest, the desires, and the view-point of a big schoolboy, clean and strong. For cakes and sweet things he always had a rapacious appetite, and loved above all to finish a meal by consuming a plateful of tangerines, leaving a relic of yellow skins for an amazed waiter. This passion for fruit,

cultivated in New Zealand, was never inimical to his condition on court. Indeed, like the Allens, he could eat almost anything and apparently never feel the worse; but in those days he never let wine pass his lips.

To the Casino, as to the courts, he repaired, on that first Riviera visit, in flannel trousers and a Norfolk jacket, apparently quite surprised when the solemn janitors looked askance at his attire. As usual, he was equal to the occasion. An official who barred his progress and intimated that Norfolk jackets violated the regulations, was smilingly handed the offending belt, which Anthony quickly slipped from its fastenings. And before the door-keeper could recover from his amazement, Anthony had marched boldly in. It was this air of *insouciance*—a perfectly natural attribute—which proved irresistible. Even at the Front generals were wont . . . but of that later.

We were together at many places—in

France, Germany, Sweden, Belgium, Spain, America—and I never remember a community into which Anthony's personality and philosophy did not penetrate. Before he became wedded to motor traction he was compelled to use the train, but its confinement was always irksome. Many an altercation—and once or twice a scuffle—did he have with some somnolent Teuton who insisted arrogantly that the compartment should be hermetically sealed. On a long journey I would often doze off, and, on waking, find that Anthony had disappeared. Proceeding along the train, I would discover him leaning out of the open window, drawing in deep draughts of fresh air. Then, as always, he carried a minimum of luggage, and packing was an art which he never acquired, nor, indeed, ever attempted to master. Many a time have I gone into his bedroom on the eve of departure, and found him stuffing all his worldly goods into a trunk—dress-clothes, a starched shirt, jewellery and other

souvenirs of victory on the courts—for all the world as if he were cramming waste paper into a sack. He was constantly borrowing articles of attire, and as constantly losing them. But his manner was so ingratiating, one never seemed to mind.

On one occasion, in the spring of 1906, we went on from Cannes to Barcelona, travelling all night and arriving about eight in the morning. We were met by the secretary of the tournament, who commanded that, since we were a day or two overdue, we should report ourselves at the Club without fail in an hour's time. Accordingly, after a hurried breakfast, Anthony and I set out from our hotel to locate the courts. That was more difficult than might be imagined, for neither of us could speak Spanish, and our cabman did not know a word of French or English. Anthony's ingenuity and the free use of a racket alone enabled us to reach our destination. Imagine our surprise when we found the ground absolutely deserted, the

pavilion locked up, and three diminutive youths, probably ball-boys, engaged in a sham bull-fight on the courts! It appeared that the Spanish temperament, somewhat sluggish, did not rise to morning play. Realising this defect, the secretary, an Englishman, made it a habit to time his matches at least a couple of hours before he expected them to begin!

Anthony swept the board at Barcelona; he was a long way too good for any other competitor. Besides winning the open singles on his head, he carried off the handicap singles from owe fifty, and, if I remember rightly, he and I won the handicap doubles from owe forty. The prizes were all presented by local grandees. For one of the doubles events we both got a gold-headed walking-stick, presented by the Civil Governor of Barcelona. But Anthony's stick never got further than the city boundaries.

Sometimes I lost touch with Anthony on these continental tours, but there usually came to hand some laconic note

which recorded his progress. Here is one which refers to the French covered court championships at Auteuil:

"Le Grand Hotel, Lyon.
"*April*, 1907.

"No programmes at Paris. Open singles —Ritchie beaten by Decugis in semi-final —latter good, former only medium; his back court steadiness overwhelmed by Decugis' brilliancy, mostly at net. Ritchie at one time within a point of match. Final —Decugis had two sets to my 1, but I had 4 to 1 in fourth set. Decugis done, I fit. He said he had sprained his back, so I won. Open doubles played next day. Decugis better than ever. Ritchie and I beat Decugis and Germot 6—4, 6—4, 6—1. Germot bad, Ritchie uncertain. Open mixed—Miss Eastlake[1] and I beat Madame Fenwicke and Decugis; good game, very fast. Miss Eastlake very fine form; won singles event without losing a set. French

[1] Miss Eastlake Smith, now Mrs. Lamplough.

people thought Madame Fenwicke would win, but Miss Eastlake was too good, and her graceful style greatly admired by the French. Tournament arrangements fairly bad. Rhodes very good on wood.

"TONY."

This, of course, is only lawn tennis "jargon," but it proves that Anthony was something of a critic and something of a humorist.

An idea of the strenuous character of Anthony's Continental touring, its rush, its swift translation, and its adventures, is conveyed in glancing through the picture postcards which he dispatched to Christchurch. His mother has carefully preserved these, as well she might, for they form a vivid memorial of his motor-cycle travels across Europe. Here are some:

To his mother, at Builth, Wales:

"FRANZENSBAD,
"*August*, 1906.

"I had a ripping good journey, and slept well, as I had an open window. The other

occupants were all good chaps, one, a New Zealander, recognised me from having seen me at Wimbledon. Thanks to my sleeping berth I arrived here this morning at 11.30 fresh as the morning dew. It was raining so did not play a match until late this evening ; it was an easy double. They mean to try and make a little gate-money out of me, as I see 'Mr. A. F. Wilding' labelled all over the place. In my hotel is an old American, president of the golf club, and Count and Countess N—— and about three grown-up sons. She is sister-in-law to the Empress of Austria. Franzensbad is quite a small place but very interesting. I have met no end of Prague people."

"Buda Pesth,
"*May* 30, 1907.

"Arrived here to-day and won a couple of singles in the afternoon *v.* Adams and a local champion, who of course rejoices in an impossible name. I won singles at Vienna, but lost the mixed doubles ; thor-

oughly enjoyed myself, but must go to bed early to play tennis well."

"LIÉGE,
"*June* 3, 1907, 6.30 *a.m.*

"Have advanced another stage on my journey. It is now about 6.30 a.m., and I have to wait here until 7.40 for the Calais train. It is raining, and of course awfully cold after Vienna and Buda Pesth. I won the singles *v.* Wesseley 6—4, 6—3, 6—4, and the doubles with Kreuzer *v.* Wesseley and Kinzl, 6—2, 6—3. Am very glad to be on the road home to England. Probably I go straight to the Dixons' for the tournament and to rest."

"LILLE,
"*June* 3, 1907, 12.45.

"Still a stage further. Just had a good lunch."

Back on the Continent after Wimbledon and the Davis Cup:

"MARIENBAD,
"*July* 29, 1907.

"I had a fairly comfortable journey

here, and so far have been having a delightful time. Prince Rohan is here again —one of the very best of good sportsmen. I have the bike here and had a short spin yesterday. I have promised to visit Prince Rohan on it. It is simply ripping here, with no worry or anxiety of Davis Cup or centre court at Wimbledon."

"DONAUPARTIE VON LINZ,
"*July*, 1907.

"Arrived here about 7 this evening. Only about 100 more kil. to do. If I get to Wessely before four to-morrow I win £1 from old Shannon [1] and £1 from Anto Prinsep."

To his sister Cora :

"BURG VENNINGEN, BADEN BADEN,
"*September* 8, 1907.

"Arrived here yesterday. Baron Venningen [2] is very fit, and has got a new

[1] Mr. J. J. Shannon, R.A.
[2] Since killed in the war.

85 h.p. Mercédès (6 cylinders); it goes 135 kil. per hour on the level. The captain of the German Emperor's yacht *Meteor*, which won the King's prize this year, is also staying with the Baron. No tennis to-day as it is pouring with rain."

"BURGHAUSEN,
"*September* 18, 1907.

"A very pretty place 100 kil. from Munich *en route* to Bohemia. Bike went like an angel this morning. Roads perfect."

From Prince Rohan's place in Bohemia he wrote to Mr. Charles Voigt:

"CHAUSTNIK, SOBIESLAU, BOHEMIA.

"Never again assert your superiority over me with regard to writing letters. Certainly I have an object in writing, but surely no sane man does anything without an object. The motive is not to remind you and J. J.[1] that you must send two

[1] Presumably Mr. Shannon.

golden sovereigns to me at Lovrin, but to tell you how damned hard I had to go to retain my old honour and glory of a first-class motor-cyclist. I had no idea the distance would be so great, the road so bad, the country so confoundedly hilly. However, all is well that ends well, and I did what I set out to do. I rode over 100 kil. without a brake at one time. God knows how I managed it. If the hill looked too steep I had to pop off before it was too late. I had one puncture (nail), but tell your 'shover' that my tyres went splendidly, only this one nail. Thank him again for me, and tell him how successful his readjustment was. I thought five francs cheaper than a cigarette box. My other troubles were oil on sparking-plugs and a broken inlet valve. I stayed one night at Constance, one at Munich, and last night at Linz. Times were: left Lucerne 4 o'clock; arr. Constance 9, night; left Constance 8 morning; arr. Linz 7.15 night; left Linz 9 morning; arr. Wessely

2.10; left Wessely 3.30; arr. Prince Rohan's 4.20.

"I don't suppose these times will interest you much, but they serve to show how hard I had to stick at it. Of course any repairs, a hurried lunch, long road, various stoppages, two Customs, and otherwise, come in; am going partridge shooting to-morrow."

After his visit he wrote to his mother:

"VIENNA,
"*September* 23, 1907.

"Just arrived in Vienna from Pr. Rohan's. Did the 180 kil. from the wilds of Bohemia to the centre of Vienna (Hotel Imperial) in eight hours. Prince to win his bet of 25 kronen has to do a better time on his Farmer's tricar. I think my money is more or less safe. I sent you off three waltzes fairly well tried here, but no doubt very new in N.Z. My luggage is still on the way from Lucerne."

Early in 1908, with Austria in the grip

Baron Lipthay, his Host at Lovrin, Southern Hungary.

At San Remo, 1908.

of winter, Anthony trained from Lovrin to Venice, and from there motor-cycled to San Remo, via Mantova, Cremona, and Genoa. To his mother he wrote :

" GRAND HOTEL, VENICE,
" *February* 14, 1908.

" Well, here I am in Venice. Had a most awful job getting bike through and will never do it again. She got broken a bit, but will I hope be mended to-morrow at 9 a.m."

To his sister :

" MANTOVA,
" *February* 15.

" I am at present waiting for my bicycle which has to have a lamp bracket fitted. Hope to get to Cremona to-night—67 kil."

To his mother again :

" SAN REMO,
" *February* 18.

" Arrived safely at San Remo to-day. From Genoa here I had a lovely run,

Genoa 12.15, San Remo, 7.15 (about). Roads excellent. Tournament to-morrow, and have not really played for six months. San Remo very pretty. Write fully directly."

On his way north from the Riviera :

"AVIGNON,
"*April* 4.

"Ran through here from Cannes, 248 kilometres. Had three punctures. Roads in France are wonderfully good and straight, but a little bumpy in places."

"LYON,
"*April* 5.

"Have just arrived here on the motor-cycle from Cannes. I came 500 kilometres in two days. The motor was fairly good the first day and very good the second."

"SS. COPENHAGEN, HOOK OF HOLLAND,
"*May* 11.

"Motor-cycled from the Dixons' and caught the Harwich boat yesterday. My

route lay via Grantham, Huntingdon, Cambridge, Bury, and Ipswich, about 220 miles. I caught the boat by an hour. Am leaving directly for Wiesbaden via Utrecht, Cologne, Coblenz, etc."

"EMMERICH,
"*May* 12.

"Roads here via Utrecht and Rotterdam are rotten; joking apart, all cobblestones, and I arrived here thoroughly tired out, though my journey was only 180 kil. Now I have left cobblestones and may reach Wiesbaden to-morrow night."

"UERDINGEN,
"*May* 12.

"Raining and roads awful. Don't think I will go very far to-day as there is not much pleasure."

"WIESBADEN,
"*May* 18.

"Am dining with my conqueror in mixed doubles, and play three finals to-morrow."

To his young brother, whom he addressed as "Edwyn Arnold, etc., Wilding":

"HOTEL ROSE, WIESBADEN,
"*May* 18.

"This is my hotel. I had a good motor-cycle ride over here on the new machine. I will ask Oscar Dixon to send you a post-card taken just before I left for Harwich. I travelled 220 miles (about) in one day."

To his mother:

"ARRAS,
"*May* 25.

"On way to Paris, motor-cycle. Won three open events at Lille. Leave for Bordeaux with Simond[1] to-morrow Sud express."

To his brother, Edwyn:

"BORDEAUX,
"*May* 28.

"I am now at Bordeaux, a large seaport town where they make and send away a

[1] G. M. Simond.

lot of wine. They also have a very good tennis club with splendid courts and a pretty ground. I went on my motor-cycle from Lille to Paris, but came here by train, as the tournament commenced to-day."

To his mother, the same day :

"BORDEAUX,
"*May* 28.

"Here I am at Bordeaux. The club-house is a beautiful villa, and there are eight courts, all excellent. All appointments are absolutely first-class and so far they have treated me right royally. It is very hot and the light brilliant in the extreme. Return to Paris Sunday night and hope to motor to London via Rouen, Havre, Southampton, Surbiton, then go to Liverpool for Northern."

To his brother again :

"HAVRE,
"*June* 2.

"Have you big high rocks like this up Robin Hood Bay ? I hope you still play

tennis in the proper way, as I am looking forward to finding my young brother a budding champion."

To his mother the same day:

"HAVRE,
"*June* 2.

"Hospitality at Bordeaux beat anything I have ever come across. I love the people; quite the nicest men I have ever met. Left at 10.30 after dining with de Luze, the real tennis champion. I won singles."

On the Austrian round, to his mother:

"AVESNES,
"*August* 2.

"Fetched up here this evening on motor from Dieppe. No English spoken anywhere. A quiet little town *en fête* to-night with lanterns and soldiers—why or wherefore I don't know."

"MARIENBAD,
"*August.*

"Weather very bad. Played a few mild

matches, but nothing important yet. Froitzheim is best here and is good. My luggage has not yet turned up from Dieppe, which has made me very angry all day. Michel, my old servant at the Lipthays', came and watched me play to-day, and the old chap was genuinely pleased to see me. The Lipthays are charming as usual."

"MARIENBAD,
(*A few days later.*)

"Luggage not arrived yet. Very inconvenient. Have to refuse going to dinner, etc. Lady S——, one of the society lights here, asked me last night, but of course I had to refuse. Have been very quiet, and am very fit and have no excuse for defeat except other man's good play. Froitzheim is not a —— man, but a good player."

"EGER,
"*August* 12.

"Won doubles and mixed doubles at Marienbad, and was beginning to get in

slightly better form. Come over to Carlsbad late and was scratched in singles. Was late as the whole day was spent in getting my luggage. Now all is collected and am getting my motor-bike. Am very fit and had a good time in Marienbad. Going to Switzerland."

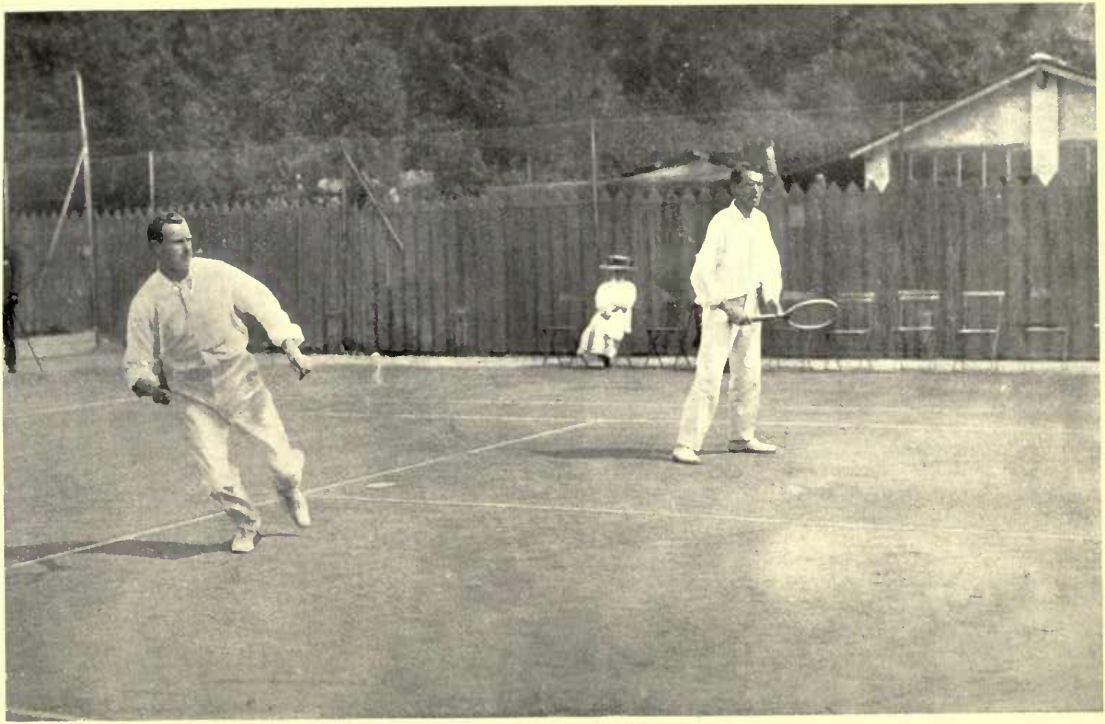
Here he speaks of his prospective return to New Zealand :

"RITTER'S PARK HOTEL, BAD HOMBURG,
"*August* 27.

"Have got berth No. 70 in *Moldavia* leaving Marseilles October 2, so in a very short time Marsden the butcher, if he still lives, must sharpen his knives. Am heartily, but momentarily, sick of tennis ; can never see the ball, and it is at least 10 to 1 against my winning open singles here. Probably will not go to Baden again. Am looking forward to coming to N.Z."

"HOMBURG,
"*September* 1.

"Homburg tournament over. Wilding



ON THE CANNES CLUB COURTS, 1911.

beaten by Froitzheim by 3 sets to 1, a fairly good game. Won double. Leave for Baden to-day."

"ANTHONY."

The defeat of Anthony by Froitzheim at Homburg provoked quite a sensation among the fashionable gallery. The Germans were naturally more than pleased; they were almost arrogant. It will be noted that Anthony quietly abandoned his idea of not proceeding to Baden-Baden. He went on there, trained carefully, and took an ample revenge on Froitzheim.

"METZ,
"*September* 6.

"Motored from Baden here, but missed my way at the beginning, and had to do an extra hundred kil. I passed through the German army on manœuvres. Bike went well. Two more days should see me in England."

"BOULOGNE,
"*September* 11.

"Got here 4.15; boat leaves 7.10. Motor just struggled in, but eleven hundred miles without overhauling tells its tale."

It is not the purpose of this volume to catalogue Anthony Wilding's lawn tennis successes. Legion, they were spread over all quarters of the globe. He had won championships at courts as far apart as Wimbledon, Melbourne, Johannesburg, Paris, Homburg, Nice, Christchurch (N.Z.), Brussels, and Prague; save the American, for which he never competed, he held every title of eminence in the lawn tennis world. No player of this or any age covered so much ground to get from one court to another, or covered it so rapidly.

Taking but one year alone, we find him in New Zealand at the beginning of 1907, on the Riviera in March, in Paris in April, in London (where he won all three covered court championships) in early May, at Wiesbaden the same month, in Austria in

late May, at Wimbledon in June, in Austria again in July, back in England the same month, at Homburg in August, at Baden-Baden in September, at Eastbourne in the middle of the month, and back in Austria for the winter.

That was only twelve months, yet 1908 was even more crowded with travel. For, after two months on the Riviera, he came up to Paris, proceeded to Queen's, returned to the Continent, came back to retain the doubles championship at Wimbledon, motor-cycled from Land's End to John o' Groat's, went off to Dieppe, made the Austrian and German rounds, took ship for Melbourne for the Davis Cup matches, won the Davis Cup for Australasia, then went on to New Zealand to win the championship for the second time. The following spring he was back again in Melbourne, defeating Norman Brookes in the championship of Victoria, and then, in less than a year, he was at Johannesburg, winning the South African championship.

Throughout those two and a half strenuous years he was always full of what he himself would have called "beans"; his interest in the game never flagged, and his ambition to reach a higher pinnacle never wavered. Here is a characteristic letter he wrote to me from Sheffield in the summer of 1907:

"ROYAL VICTORIA STATION HOTEL, SHEFFIELD;
"*Saturday*, 1907.

"Sheffield was my first English tournament, so return to it whenever possible. Always stay with my friend Mr. Dixon at Oughtybridge.

"Go to Cambridge on Monday with Norman Brookes for two or three days' practice and to show him my *Alma Mater*. Play a match Australasia *v.* Cambridge on Tuesday. Doust and Sharp will probably make up the four. As you know, always been very keen on Cambridge tennis. Play at Beckenham with Brookes after we come down from Cambridge.

With Béla and Antal Lipthay at Lovrin, 1907.

"Last tour abroad most enjoyable I have ever had. While players in England mudlarked, I only had three wet days in five weeks; glorious sunshine most of the time. Play surprisingly good in Austria. Kinzl and Wesseley on home courts were very good; both coming to Wimbledon. Razny and several other young native Bohemians show tremendous promise. Vienna delightful place. Opera nicest thing there; spent much time in it. Buda Pesth one of the prettiest towns I know. River Danube lovely. Hungarian men not very good players. Frl. Madarasz and Frl. Csery, who were on the Riviera, both good. Did a good deal of sightseeing as well as tennis. People in all places tremendously hospitable. Courts at Buda Pesth very prettily situated on an island in the Danube.

"Did not get lost and did not change my carriage once all the way from Buda Pesth to Liége. Didn't know I had been lost until I bought a *Daily Mail* at Lille

en route home. Was very surprised to hear about it. Both wrote and wired that I could not get back to Leicester,[1] and never entered at all, or informed the committee that I had any intention. After Davis Cup probably going to Russia or Marienbad.

"In a great hurry; writing at workmen's dinner; some 200 of Mr. Dixon's employees.

"TONY.

"P.S.—Please send 'oppin' rope.

"TONY."

Another illustration of his all-round keenness in those two years—for it was not until 1910, when he first won the championship at Wimbledon, that he began to choose his tournaments with discrimination—is furnished by Mr. Fisher, who went

[1] He was entered at the Leicester tournament, and when he did not appear a newspaper "story" was published to the effect that he had been lost on the Continent.

over to Melbourne for the Davis Cup in 1908.

" After the International match Anthony and I proceeded to Sydney for the Australasian championships. Anthony did not compete in the singles, electing that this event should be won by F. B. Alexander of America, whom he had so recently defeated in the deciding Davis Cup tie at Melbourne.

" Afterwards we crossed over together to Auckland, arriving on Sunday. Though wet, Anthony insisted that we should stretch our sea-legs on the tennis court that afternoon. We went to the pavilion, and found it shut. With the ingenuity of a professional burglar, he unfastened the window, climbed in and ferreted out a couple of warped rackets and some weather-beaten balls, and we had a knock in our ordinary clothes, removing our boots. The same night we travelled by the main trunk train to Wellington, and Anthony slept on

a seat in the carriage all night long, with an overcoat for a pillow and the window wide open. A photograph of him in the morning, with his soot-smothered face on which raindrops had fallen, would have delighted his friends. In a few days he was competing merrily in the championships at Nelson, where he won the singles, and just lost the doubles. May I add that I think his service was then at its best? In later years it lost some of its pace and kick."

Anthony was at Christchurch most of 1909. He was in his father's office qualifying for the New Zealand Bar. But he did not devote all his time and attention to the law. Indeed, somewhat to his father's astonishment, he set up a motor-cycle garage down town, and was there ready to do business in cycles. For Anthony was always fascinated with wheels. They implied motion, and that to him was life.

During his *va-et-vient* on the Continent

Anthony made many friends among patrons of sport, chiefly Austrian, German, and French. They were attracted by his personality, and competed among themselves for his company. Owners of big yachts, of shoots, and of large country estates were only too pleased to have him as a guest for a week or a month. Here is a letter, descriptive of one of these visits, which he wrote to me from Hungary in 1907 :

" c/o Baron Lipthay, Lovrin Torontal,
via Buda Pesth,
" *October* 6.

" Am still alive but leading quite a different life to my usual one. After parting with you at Baden I played at Lucerne. Allens as usual very amusing. Just because the committee had arranged the single to be played first, the Allens objected, and insisted upon playing the double first.

" I motored from Lucerne to Prince Rohan's, 850 kilometres, in three days ; came through Zurich, Konstanz, Kempton, Munich, Linz, and Wessely. Shot some

partridges with the Prince, who was very well and was genuinely sorry that you were not able to go and stay with him. After spending about a week with the Prince I motored to Kömend (Hungary), spending one night in Vienna *en route*. I immensely enjoyed my stay with the Batthyanys,[1] and came on here some of the way by motor, but some by train where the roads were bad.

"My home here is delightful. I motor and ride, play a very little mild tennis. However, rain and snow will soon put a stop to that. It is a beautiful place, about three-quarters of the way from Buda Pesth to Belgrade.

"I want you to do two things for an old friend:

"1. Send me a few lines occasionally to tell me how things, especially tennis things, are progressing.

"2. Order me

"(*a*) *Bystander*.

[1] The late Prince Batthyany, an old Etonian and an intimate friend of King Edward VII.

"(*b*) *Daily Mail* (Continental).

"(*c*) A sound magazine with good articles such as the *Nineteenth Century*, but that I leave to you.

"I enclose cheque, which please fill up to the amount required. I want them from now until February 27, when I hope to leave here fit and well to join you for the old campaign on the Riviera. Lots of training this year. I have had my fill of going to bed late, so to bed here before ten always.

"Yours ever and ever,

"ANTHONY F. WILDING."

Anthony was staying at Lovrin as tutor to Baron Lipthay's two sons. The proposal was made to him when he was on a visit to Chaustnik, Prince de Rohan's place in Bohemia. He had a very happy six months at Lovrin. Baron and Baroness Lipthay were very kind to him, and his pupils, Béla and Antal, were charming boys who absolutely revered him. As the

following letter to me shows, he found, in addition to riding, skating, and ice-hockey, some sport for his gun :

"LOVRIN, TORONTAL,
"*November* 9, 1907.

"Have practically recovered my good health, also have just returned from shooting. I am quite hot on hares now. Driven partridges I never shot in N.Z., and find it very difficult to be consistent with them. It freezes like hell here every night—10 degrees of frost one night. I have hardly seen rain since I arrived in Hungary.

"May I trouble you again for books? When once I have read them I have finished, so anything in the way of expensive works I would like to bar. Would you be so kind as to order me : (1) *Robbery under Arms*, (2) *Browning's Poems* (Selection), (3) *Four Georges* (Thackeray), (4) *Horace Walpole's Letters* (Selection), (5) Southey's *Life of Nelson*, (6) *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare), (7) Carlyle's *Sartor*

Resartus, (8) *Earl of Chatham* (Macaulay), (9) *Clive* (Macaulay), (10) *Silas Marner* (George Eliot).

" Also if you know of any good novels or books of travel (especially) please throw them in. Hope I am not a devil of a nuisance.

" Yours ever,

" ANTHONY F. WILDING.

" P.S.—I also want particularly a book on the keeping of tame rabbits."

A request for more books came along five weeks later :

" LOVRIN, TORONTAL,
" *December* 18, 1907.

" Do you mind ordering the following for me : (1) *Motor Cycles and How to Manage Them*, (2) Doherty's *Book of Lawn Tennis*, (3) *Amateur Sport*, which I believe is old *Lawn Tennis*, for the past 3 months and next 2 months, (4) *Winning Post Annual*, (5) *Unto this Last* (Ruskin).

"I am as fit as the proverbial fiddle. It is freezing like hell again, but unfortunately there is no water to skate on. When not freezing too hard we course hares and ride and jump. . . . Enclosed blank cheque as usual."

The juxtaposition in this list of the *Winning Post Annual* and Ruskin's *Unto this Last* was a characteristic, if unconscious, touch of humour.

Here is one of his Lovrin postcards to his mother :

"We are on the way home to Lovrin after a delightful 17 days, mostly of shooting. The Baron and Baroness have both signed *re* my health which is A1. I shot 65 hares in one day at Bator."

Then follows a certificate from the Lipthays :

"Have never seen your son looking in better health."

He also sent home to Christchurch many snapshots depicting outdoor incidents. On the back of each Anthony wrote a descriptive title, for instance :

" The Baroness at Lovrin in her rabbit house, with a special rabbit boasting a pedigree of great length and quality."

Again :

" A street in Lovrin village. Pigs been out to feed returning to their homes. One man collects all the village pigs in early morning, feeds them on the common, and brings them home in the evening. Cattle and horses dealt with in a similar way. Man blows a horn, and all the pigs come running out."

And again :

" The General shoots a roebuck instead of a hare. Celá (the loader) is reported to have said, ' Quick ! A great big hare ! '—

and the General shot a roebuck out of season—an unpardonable sin."

Of Anthony's more serious shooting in Hungary, with its feudal ceremonial, I shall have something to say in a subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER VI

MOTOR TRACTION

ANTHONY'S passion for motor-traction has been emphasised. Physically a perfect machine himself, he took an absorbing interest in all mechanical contrivances which translated man rapidly from one point to another. In boyhood it was a bicycle (when not a pony, groomed by himself); in youth a motor-cycle; later, a motor-car; in war an armoured car and the aeroplane. For Anthony a motor-cycle or a motor-car was not a convenience, nor a luxury which money could buy and a servant clean; it was a living thing, a companion, a friend. Of fittings and patents he had intimate knowledge; they were like nursery ware, nicknamed and treasured. As some men are termed "horsey," Anthony might have

been termed "motorey." The open road was his highway, oil his food, distance his victim, speed his god.

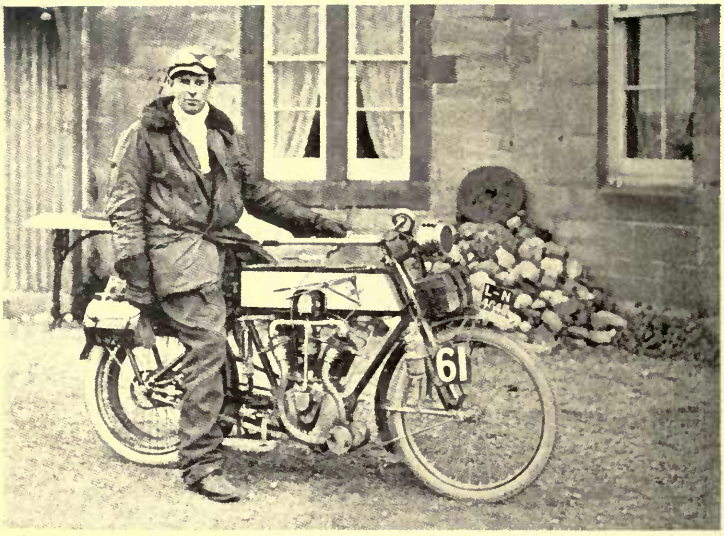
His peregrinations were amazing, cosmopolitan, full of adventure. He knew the physiography of Europe better than most mapmakers. He was a practical authority, because an intimate student, of its roads, rivers, and mountain chains. A continuous journey of five hundred miles was an orthodox ride. He would have gone thrice that distance if sea or snow had not intervened. He knew his France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Switzerland and Scandinavia thoroughly. Famous war towns like Antwerp, Malines, Ypres, Louvain, Belgrade—he passed through all of them in those distant days of peace. There was scarcely a frontier guard on the whole Continent whose leg he did not pull, whose importunities he did not ignore, whose laugh he did not rouse. I wonder how many sleeping hotel-keepers he extracted from bed in the small hours of the morning.

His endurance, courage, and resource were remarkable; of that we have testimony later. Nor did he only speed across Europe. He had traversed New Zealand, tested the roads of South Africa and America. I suppose it may truthfully be said that no man has seen so much of the world's crust from the saddle of a motor-cycle.

So far as European roads were concerned, Anthony held definite views as to their relative merits. He considered that English roads were superior to any others in the consistent excellence of their surface. For long, straight, open stretches, suitable for speed, he gave the palm to France. Many of the German roads resembled the French, but in Southern Germany the villages, vilely cobble-stoned, were always an obstruction to his progress. The Bavarian roads he found good, except a few of the main roads, such as Prague to Vienna, and Mulhausen to Vienna. For Austrian roads he had not a good word. Metal has to be brought from a great distance in Hungary; only the main

roads were really prepared. Some of these were serviceable, and if care were taken in selecting the route, Hungary made a new and very interesting touring ground. Serbia he regarded as a joke. After a few miles of really nice going, he suddenly found himself in the bottom of a pit in the middle of the road, or in a river bed. In both Hungary and Serbia he resorted to riding along the railway track, bumping over never-ending sleepers. The main roads of Northern Italy he knew well, and disagreed with most experts in declaring them good.

Although most of Anthony's motor-cycle tours were private adventures, he occasionally took part in speed trials organised by official bodies. Together with some of his college friends he was persuaded in July, 1908, to compete for a gold medal in the reliability trials from Land's End to John o' Groat's. Some sixty starters mobilised at Land's End. They had to average about 180 miles a day, and were given a certain small margin of time at each control (there



LAND'S END TO JOHN O' GROAT'S, 1908.
(By permission of Messrs. Methuen, Ltd.)

LONDON TO CONSTANTINOPLE, 1910: BEFORE THE START.

were about four a day) in which to arrive—that is to say, they lost marks at the rate of one a minute if they touched one of these controls before or after the scheduled hour. Some of the cycles broke in half, others developed minor ills; but in the end thirty-seven arrived. Anthony's "bike" behaved splendidly. He had not a single stop of any kind for the whole of a very severe trial. The authorities gave him a gold medal and a special prize.

He found time at the control stations to dispatch postcards to his mother in New Zealand. It is excusable that he only put a half-penny stamp on the first:

"TAUNTON,
"*July* 13, 1908 (*the first day*).

"Had a splendid non-stop run to-day. No doubt my troubles commence to-morrow. Craig and the boys are all going strong. We are at present listening to Bess o' Barn band."

The weather in Scotland was appalling,

and on arriving at the controls he found it necessary to play the garage hose over both himself and his machine.

Another under-stamped postcard :

"MOFFAT,
"*July* 15 (*postmark*).

"Arrived here in good time. Have come non-stop 500 miles. Haven't even had to touch a screw. Three days remain and 3 days are over. Behaviour of motor-bike is too good to last I fear. Feeling awfully fit."

"TAIN,
"*July* 18 (*postmark*).

"Another day over. Roads awful. Came right over Grampian Mountains in torrents of rain. Machine perfect. One hundred and twenty miles only to do. I do hope machine will last it. On arrival here I found invitation sent by Tennis Club for a Garrison Ball taking place to-night."

"JOHN O' GROAT'S,
"*July* 20 (*postmark*).

"Arrived here safely without a stop of

any sort or condition. Got gold medal. Archie [1] also arrived, but lost all marks in one control. Os. Dixon with Horn boys also arrived."

Five miles after completing the course Anthony broke an inlet valve, but, having fitted a new one, he immediately rode back to London via Edinburgh. Here is a note or two on his return journey :

"INVERNESS,
"*July* 21.

"Having level run down. Hope to stay to-morrow night in Edinburgh. Awfully pretty up here."

"EDINBURGH,
"*July* 22.

"A good run down from Inverness; came also through Nairn. The boys and Craig were too late to catch the ferry, so arrive here to-morrow."

"RETFORD,
"*July* 24.

"Stranded here for some hours. Broke

[1] Mr. A. Craig.

a big bearing inside engine of motor-bike and had to wait arrival of a new one from factory. Hope to leave for Dieppe tomorrow or next day. Came from Edinburgh to Doncaster yesterday, 240 miles."

In order to catch the morning boat to Dieppe at Newhaven, Anthony travelled all through the night. When he reached the south coast he had covered over two thousand miles in ten days.

While home in New Zealand in 1909, Anthony, still wedded to his motor-bicycle, accomplished several long-distance rides which attracted attention. His parents were at Nelson for the New Zealand championships, and returned to Christchurch by train. The following day Anthony arrived fresh from his triumph on the courts, having motor-cycled three hundred miles in two days, in the course of which he crossed several river-beds and negotiated many bad roads. It was the first time this journey had ever been undertaken on a motor-cycle.

In March, 1909, Anthony entered for the reliability trials to Akaron and back (one hundred and fourteen miles). In connection with them was a hill-climbing competition from Barry's Bay to the hill-top, a distance of between four and five miles, with severe grades and sharp turns. Anthony covered the distance in eight minutes, thirty-nine seconds, half a minute faster than the second machine, and over a minute faster than the third machine. The feat drew from Mr. E. James, the head of the Dunlop Tyre Company, the following note :

" You will be pleased to hear of your splendid performance in the hill-climbing contest last Saturday, as, notwithstanding the mistake made in your dismounting at the wrong point at the finish, your time was eight minutes thirty-nine seconds. Had it not been for the error your time must have been six or seven seconds faster. It was really a wonderful performance."

At the end of 1909, in the middle of the New Zealand summer, Anthony set out for one of those extended motor-cycle trips over new country dear to his heart. The objective was Auckland, and the road lay from Christchurch to Lyttelton, then by boat to Wellington on the North Island, and then northwards—virtually a journey of 570 miles, over some of the worst roads ever attempted by an intrepid cyclist.

The conveyance was a 6 h.p. Bat Jap motor-cycle fitted with a P. & M. two-speed gear, and a time-honoured side-carriage attachment, in which his friend, Fred Anderson, was the passenger. They left Opawa amidst jeers from their friends, and advice that they should keep near the railway. A number of friendly bets were made: (1) as to whether they would arrive without assistance, horse or otherwise; (2) as to whether they would arrive within a week; and (3) as to whether the motor-cycle would carry them both to Auckland at all.

Anthony has left some notes behind of this remarkable journey and of the adventures encountered. The united weight of the transport was twenty-seven stone, with another seven stone added for luggage, spare tyres, and tools; but the engine carried the tourists up the Port Hills, somewhat to their surprise, without stopping:

"We rode our machine up the wharf alongside the s.s. *Maori*, and had her slung on board under the able supervision of a stevedore in his Sunday suit and Saturday night bowler hat. He, or rather his staff, were not entirely successful in their task, as they managed to bend the two-speed gear rod, and break the front mudguard. However, next morning a little muscular persuasion and some copper wire (a useful article on these trips) put everything in order once more."

Getting clear of Wellington they ascended the Rimutakas without any trouble.

Anderson had not to lose touch with the basket once and the engine went famously. At Greytown they lunched, and took on board more petrol. The roads just here were excellent, but as they had a strong wind behind them, and a hot sun, it was pretty torrid going. Anthony remarked :

" We paced a sporting Chinaman on a push-bike for a few miles, going just fast enough to encourage him to stick at it. At length the Oriental mind grasped the fact that he was having his leg pulled, and once more dropped back and joined his friends, a hotter and a wiser man. About this time one of the bolts holding the exhaust pipes and silencer worked off, so we removed the whole paraphernalia and our engine made a noise like a 120 h.p. Mercédès racing-car. There was practically no traffic on the road, and if we did meet anything we always stopped. We found that with the silencer removed, the engine developed nearly an extra horse-power.

After an extraordinary meal termed Sunday " tea," a sort of cross between afternoon tea, lunch, and breakfast, we ran into Dannevirke, where mine host of Andrews' hotel afforded us most excellent hospitality and enabled us to take our ease."

At Norswood the hot weather, huge load, and the climbing of the Rimutakas, having exhausted their oil, they were in difficulties, but they discovered " half-a-cupful " in the place, and were enabled to carry on to Tekapau. Here there was an amusing incident over lunch :

" After struggling with lukewarm roast mutton and potatoes of the same temperature for some time, we debated on the possibilities of the sweets, the names of which, " doughnuts and plum pudding," were elaborately set out on a beautiful ménu covered with flies. Though the day was warm, the proximity of Christmas made plum pudding sound promising. I turned to Anderson and said, ' Do you think

the plum pudding would poison us ? ' Unfortunately the handmaiden waiting upon us overheard this remark, and repeated it to the cook. I can truthfully say the remark was aimed at plum pudding *qua* plum pudding, as the legal mind would term it, and not against the cook, although our experience of her delicacies up to that time had not been of the happiest. Suddenly there was a great stir kitchenwards, and lo ! an apparition, Mrs. Cook, forsooth, appeared at the door like a whirlwind, and in a flaring rage. ' Hinsulted I am, hinsulted I say. Many things 'ave I put up with in this 'ere 'ouse, but never before 'ave I been hinsulted ! ' Anderson and I, not wanting to depart at enmity with a woman so interested in her profession as the cook had proved herself to be, simply grovelled in our efforts to pacify her, but to little avail. However, we eventually succeeded in soothing her wrath, and with a hearty handshake, departed the best of friends."

The little town of Napier, approached along the sea-front, reminded Anthony of the Riviera. They left for Pohui at 7 p.m., intending to cover the thirty miles before dark. For the first fourteen all went well, but, on trying to rush a water-race, which proved unexpectedly deep, they stuck in the middle, and were nearly submerged, having to disembark and push their carriage out. It was now dark, and the hills seemed horribly steep. The road surface was eight inches deep in dust ; the back wheel had not a chance to grip properly, and the engine's work was doubled. Anderson had to be shot out half-way up several of the hills, but eventually they got through safely, and supped off underdone green ducks' eggs.

The next morning they began the biggest feat of the tour, the ascent of Titi-o-Kura. A dozen friends had predicted that they would never pass over this mountain. Before starting the climb they removed the silencer. About half-way up Anderson was

dropped, and Anthony completed the remaining climb without once stopping. At the summit, Anderson re-entered the basket for the last time; he did not have to walk again. The descent on the other side was fearful:

"All brakes and compressions which absolutely locked the back wheel hardly kept us from sliding over the cliff. We now descended right down into the Mohaka River and crossed the new bridge, the old bridge having been washed away by the severe floods of Easter, 1897. The scenery all the way from Pohui had been simply grand, typically New Zealand, with beautiful native bush, high mountains and a snow-fed river swiftly rushing through a gorge; nowhere is there such scenery as in our little islands, and I speak with not a little experience."

After many violent struggles through dust a foot deep, and many predicaments—they ran out of lubricating oil, having used

the same quantity for 150 miles as usually lasted 350—they came to their last stiff climb up the Te Ronga Ruma, and enjoyed a long run down on a beautiful graded road with a fine surface, into Tarawera, with its splendid mountain scenery and its native bush. But they had a painfully dusty and heavy road, with no redeeming feature, across the plains to Taupo.

"We saw Ngauruhoi pouring forth smoke, but much finer was Ruapehu, 8,897 feet high, wreathed in her spotless white mantle. Throughout this part of our journey we passed countless herds of wild horses. At Taupo we got petrol costing 3*s*. 3*d*. a gallon and bad at that, and the most inferior oil I have ever insulted my engine by running her with. We ran along three miles and thoroughly inspected the Huka Falls, undoubtedly the finest thing of their kind I have ever seen. In fact, they impressed us both immensely. Three more miles saw us at Wairakei. After half an hour's hard work

patching the basket's wheel tyre cover, we had a most delightful swim in the hot swimming pool. The baths are arranged so that you can first swim in beautifully hot water and then jump into a cold swimming-bath. We changed, and had an excellent dinner."

Anthony turned in early and was fast asleep when two excited men came rushing into his room :

" Both shouted at once, but eventually I pieced fragments of interjections together, and this was the story : After bathing I had said to Anderson, ' Suppose we leave our dirty motor clothes down here in the bathing-shed and hurry up to dinner.' This we did, bundling them all into the common bag which usually bumped about behind me on the motor-bike. After dinner Anderson, being of a more methodical disposition than I, decided to rescue his clothes and the bag, but having regard to my feelings, he left my clothes there for me in the morning, and the

trousers hanging up in a particularly conspicuous place. Just before going to sleep a series of female shrieks had reached my ears, but I thought it must be a Maori tangi or something of the sort, and in a few minutes was in blissful unconsciousness. At the time I was not aware that it was the correct thing at Wairakei for all the ladies except the ones who had just arrived by coach—they, poor souls, are considered too dirty—to bathe at 10 p.m. before going to bed. One fair nymph on emerging from her ablutions espied my trousers, and in a few seconds all was confusion. Sympathy for the drowned man took many forms, mostly noisy. One lady's husband was sent for and asked to dive for the body, but he didn't seem to relish the job—perhaps he couldn't swim under water. At any rate he preferred to offer up prayers for the departed soul rather than endeavour to find the lost body. On closer examination of the trousers, and after much colloquy and speculation, they came to the conclusion that the cut of my Bond Street

breeches resembled those of some Maori boy connected with the establishment. So off they rushed and woke this poor creature up. I was too tired and sleepy to think it very humorous that night, but next morning, after a good night's rest, the narrative of the previous night's events amused me immensely."

Next day they made Rotorua for lunch, and entered the Grand Hotel. Half-way through lunch they were pulled up:

"No doubt our grimy appearance, the result of fifty miles over pummice country, had raised the suspicions of a zealous hireling, who approached us with a peremptory request that we should plank down the money for our lunch. We asked this gentleman for Schweppes' dry ginger ale and were brought some pink concoction. When we pointed out the mistake, his only reply was, 'Oh yes, every one asks for it, but we don't keep it.'"

The side-basket was now becoming groggy, and showed signs of settling down on the off side, just where Anderson's feet usually nestled. Two coach-builders—trades-unionists, and fearful no doubt of committing a breach of some award relating to side-baskets—said they were too busy to straighten it; but they examined it for quite fifteen minutes, and then, after much conference and many headshakes, assured them it was quite impossible to do anything. So Anthony repaired to the local "push-bike" shop, and there made the basket slide up a little, while Anderson was persuaded to keep his feet on the other side. "Throughout this performance," notes Anthony, "a number of Maoris gathered round, asking extraordinary questions, and giving the 'push-bike' expert much gratuitous advice."

When they came to the Manakaus, the grade and surface became very bad. A Maori mounted on a sorry steed galloped past them in a very stiff pinch. His delight

was unbounded. The climb promised to be a long one. They stopped, dismantled their silencer, and the machine renewed the climb with fresh energy. The road was composed of a succession of baby pits and huge projecting logs of wood. Anderson and the basket would be below, Anthony and the motor-bike high up, balanced on a log standing some feet above ground. Subsequently, when the descent was made, came three punctures in quick succession, a leaking patch, a nipped tube, and darkness. At Tirau the Maoris showed the greatest possible interest in the travellers :

" Throughout our journey we found them most cheerful and obliging. It was very amusing passing them on horseback ; they always wanted to look at the flying machine, as a lot of them called it, and yet were always a little frightened of their horses. These conflicting desires made their expressions most amusing."

Within a hundred miles of Auckland

the basket succumbed to the bumps of the Manakaus. The tyre cover split right down the edge. Anthony's repair had held well, but the tyre burst in another place. They had purchased leather straps from a saddler at Cambridge, and strapped up the doubtful spots, but all to no avail; a report like a pistol brought them up.

"I tried to fit a spare 2½ inch cover on a 2¼ rim, but the cover was new and an extra big one—it didn't work. We then had to effect another repair of the twice-burst-out cover. This took a long time, and when effected carried us another twenty-five miles, when it went down again. At every bump the basket drove its nose into the road, acting as a spasmodic and involuntary brake. Not to be beaten, we again attempted to straighten up the basket and lashed the punctured tyre on to the rim with straps and flax, thus getting on another seven miles. Then suddenly the basket gave up the ghost, and dug its nose completely in inches of sand.

All this time we had been ploughing our way through sand similar to that found high on a beach which the tide never reaches. So deep and heavy was it that we often had to plough along on the second speed. No doubt the drought that had been experienced up there during the past months was in a measure accountable. We tied the basket up, and Anderson sat half on the bike and half in the basket, and thus we made our way to within 100 yards of Rangiri Hotel, when the wheel came adrift, and any further chance of restoring the basket to life was gone. We therefore disconnected the basket from the motor and distributed it to the usual admiring group of Maoris. One put the tyre round his neck and pretended it was a bagpipe; another took the wicker-work, and another the wheel, all delighted with their Christmas presents."

For the last sixty miles Anderson sat on the carrier. But the strain of holding the

machine up with over twenty-eight stone aboard was considerable. Inches of sand and dust made it skid and shoot about like a pendulum. Fortunately the travellers did not take a toss, and arrived safe and sound in Auckland. They had covered the 570 miles, over some of the worst possible roads, in five days. Anthony found, in relation to the cost of running a motor-car over the same distance, that his expense of oil and petrol, repairs, etc., was barely £2. They averaged sixty miles to one gallon of petrol. As far as the engine was concerned, they did not have to touch even a plug. Altogether, it was a most exciting and stimulating trip, in no way detrimental to the travellers' nerves.

In 1910, the following year, Anthony had several mighty rides through Europe. In the autumn he cycled from London to Evian-les-Bains on Lake Geneva and back, some three thousand miles in all. He did the journey from the Hague to Evian in three days, on the first day reaching Bonn

and on the second day Strasburg. From Evian he rode to Paris, 350 miles, in one day—perhaps his greatest Continental feat of all. There is a full account of this double journey, with its many diverting incidents, in his book, *On the Court and Off*; but I append some of the postcards which he wrote to his mother:

"WILLEMSTAD,
"*August* 7.

"Am waiting for the boat to convey me across a great big river. Left Ostend 2 a.m. yesterday morning. Rode till about 4 a.m. and slept most of day. Have another 50 kilometres to the Hague. Have had tyre troubles (nails), otherwise a good journey."

"SCHEVENINGEN,
"*August* 11.

"It is very nice and quiet out here. Am staying about 15 kilometres from the Hague with very nice people. We are in a huge wood and the surroundings are delightful."

"BONN,
"*August* 16.

"Left Hague early this morning, and made Bonn *ce soir*. It is a far cry, some 320 kil. Have just had a good meal with the unequalled German beer that father loved. Am going to bed."

"KEHL,
"*August* 18.

"Rode until late last night, and spying a decent-looking hotel with garage just outside Strasburg, stayed here. Came all the way from Bonn, a big day's work. Have 300 odd kil. to Evian, and all going well can easily do it in the day, but Ralli and my clothes won't have arrived at present. I am absolutely filthy."

"EVIAN,
"*August* 23.

"It is truly lovely here. This hotel overlooks the lake of Geneva. Everything is exactly as it should be."

" DINANT,
" *September* 8.

" Had a good journey up from Evian to Paris. Did 350 miles in one day, Evian to Melun, where tank leaked, so had to stop. Stayed a few days in Paris, and now go to Brussels for a little practice and tournament on September 12. Came via Meaux and Rheims, and slept last night at Rogroy."

Anthony spent a week or more in Brussels where he took his engine completely to pieces, and then went off via Rheims to the Château Sapicourt. The distance from Rheims to Sapicourt was only 20 kilometres, but owing to darkness it took him over two hours, and he noted :

" If you don't want to burst your tyre or pull through your belts, curb your lust for speed on these lengthy French roads."

It was while staying with Dr. Luling on

this occasion that Anthony enjoyed his first flying experience, but of that adventure I have something to say in another chapter.

Far from being surfeited by these motor-cycle tours on the Continent, Anthony, returning to England in October of the same year, planned a trip from London to Constantinople. His companion in a side-car was Dr. E. O. Pockley, the well-known Australian lawn tennis player. This intrepid pair, traversing two thousand miles, got as far as Nish, but there any further progress was impossible. The roads were impassable, the sidecar was in ruins, the saddle of the motor-bicycle broken, its back wheel buckled up. He sent stray postcards to his mother :

" STRASBURG,
" *October* 24.

" Broke shaft inside engine to-day about twelve miles other side of Strasburg. Had to take out and bring in here to get another

made. Done 500 miles, going well. Very interesting journey. Pockley and self very filthy."

"ESZEK,
"*November* 1.

"Only about 800 miles from Constantinople. Have covered nearly 2,000 miles. Terrific work. Up 6 a.m., three hours at machine, and then rode until dark. Roads passable until to-day. Now absolutely awful. Only did 50 kilometres. Covered last on railway track, bumping over sleepers as road impassable. Worked so hard no time to write. Will probably chuck it directly, as it rains, rains, rains, making roads impassable."

"BELGRADE,
"*November* 6.

"Arrived here safely after awful work getting through. Rain and mud. Weather bad, so may not go on. Found your letter awaiting me at Grand Hotel, Belgrade.

"Our Arrival at Tremerin, Southern Hungary, about Sixty Miles from Belgrade."

Three Typical Serbians encountered on the way to Belgrade.

This is a remarkable place, a blending of East and West."

"BELGRADE,
"(*A day or so later*).

"Just returned by train. We had got nearly as far as Nish, but stripped the teeth of a gear wheel. Also saddle broken to pieces, back wheel buckled out of shape, etc., etc. So we were towed to railway station and took eight hours to get here, travelling all night. Am off to Batthyany's now, and will write fully. The Serbs I hate." [1]

From the backs of his snapshots we get these extra impressions:

"TREMERIN, SOUTHERN HUNGARY.

"About sixty miles from Belgrade. Note mud. Photo taken at back of small inn where we lunched. Hungarians very in-

[1] A gentle indictment no doubt against a country whose bad roads had frustrated his advance.

terested in such a strange contrivance, which is quite new to them."

" PIA CEZIA.

" Side-car breaks asunder and causes great excitement. Natives cannot understand why I photo the wreck instead of tearing my hair as an Italian would probably have done."

Looking through these quaint photographs depicting snow, mud, and utter discomfort, I marvel again at Anthony's determination.

VII

WORLD'S CHAMPION

THE story of Anthony's championships at Wimbledon is one of persistent endeavour, elaborate and systematic training, an exhibition of perfect temper and sportsmanship. More brilliant players, greater artists, and more subtle tacticians have appeared on the centre court, but no finer athlete, no man better equipped physically for the fray, no man inspired with such a consuming desire to do his best, has ever heard the cheers ring from the stands. Anthony always meant business from the very start. I do not mean that he was influenced materially, or considered the prize or even the distinctions that were to be won, but that he regarded the contest as worthy of supreme concentration. He was out to win

not because by winning he would be acclaimed champion and superior to his fellows, but because the result would register the consummation of carefully prepared plans and a perfectly legitimate ambition. And he was a worthy champion, thoroughly clean and unsordid, physically strong, in his philosophy tolerant and inspiring. He appealed not only to the player, but to the spectator ; in the eyes of both he embodied something that was essentially alive, courageous and British.

I cannot do better than insert here three tributes which represent three points of view. The first comes to hand from Mr. F. R. Burrow, the well-known referee :

" My first recollection of Wilding (though I had no doubt seen him play previously) was in 1906, when he competed at the Epsom Tournament. This was the only time I ever saw him ' slack.' It was a very hot week, and though his matches in the singles were not particularly strenuous

affairs, they were no sooner over than he would collect three chairs and dispose himself at full length upon them, and there remain until he was again called upon to play. In these later years I have so often seen him come running off the court at Wimbledon, full of energy after a much more serious encounter, that the contrast between Epsom, 1906, and his later indefatigability nearly always recurred to my mind.

" Quite as interesting to me as the painstaking improvement in his play since 1910 was the coincident development of his character. Although I have watched nearly every great player from the days of Lawford and the Renshaws onward, I can only call to mind one who was so evidently confident and self-reliant as Wilding. And Wilding's was the self-reliance which springs from self-control—that self-control which is itself unattainable except through self-denial. He, too, had clearly taken ' Thorough ' as his watchword ; and both in his play, his

appearance, and his conversation, it was thoroughness of which he was the very personification. The spectacle, so often seen in late years, of Wilding on the base-line of the centre court, tall, upright, fresh, absolutely ready and waiting to serve, swinging his racket with a hint of impatience, while some wearied opponent dallied at the umpire's chair, snatching a breathing-space by the aid of towels and sponges—that is a picture which must flash to the minds of many when they think of the man who is gone from us.

"But Wilding, though fitness was his creed (and he served it faithfully, as it served him), was not always at the pitch to which he brought himself for Wimbledon. I recollect, especially, in 1912, he and I were both staying in the same hospitable house for the Beckenham tournament—a house the hostess of which wrote to me a little while ago: ' . . . it seems impossible that I shall never go upstairs to Tony's room again, and find that he has taken down *all*

the curtains . . .'—and he was then, as he expressed it, 'as fat as butter.' He had had no practice at all, and for some reason couldn't get any; so one morning he commandeered me to go down to the ground and knock balls over the net for him to swing himself loose at. Not having knocked the ball over the net at any champion since Pim, I did not think I should be of much use to him; but we went down, and I, at least, had an hour or so's very severe exercise, and learnt more about the subtleties of the American service than I had previously suspected. One or two strong walks on the top of this put Wilding in sufficient form to beat first Gore and then Barrett, and keep his cup; and in pleasant chaff afterwards he more than once asked me when I was going to give him some more 'good hard practice.'

"The only other time I saw him not fit was at Wimbledon in 1914. I happened to umpire a mixed in which he and Mlle. Broquedis met Doust and Miss Morton.

Mlle. Broquedis was in a very irresponsible mood, and Wilding had to do nearly everything himself. He did it, and just pulled off an exciting third set; but he was 'all out' at the finish, and held on to the umpire's chair for a few moments when they came off court. 'This isn't like you,' I said; and he replied: 'What I really want is two or three more turns like that.' He didn't get them, though; and I shall never believe that he had recovered his fitness when he met Brookes in the challenge round.

"From my point of view as a referee, Wilding was an almost ideal player to have at a tournament, though, as he played so little in tournaments in this country, I but seldom saw him at my meetings. He was seldom in for more than one event, so that arranging his matches was a very simple affair, and he was always ready to play at the time fixed for him. *O si sic omnes!* But I shall always be sorry that he did not have a go at the mixed handicap at Surbiton in 1914, in which he was

partnered by Miss Maxine Elliott. One glance at the handicap, however, was enough for him ; and I had clearly failed on that occasion to accomplish (as I have been told I sometimes do) the feat of ' making you think you can just win ; and then you find you just can't.'

" One further recollection only. He found out, by some means, that I had written the account in *Lawn Tennis* of his match with M. E. McLoughlin in the challenge round of 1913 ; and one of the most valued possessions, among many things that more than thirty years' mixing with tennis friends has given me, is the letter he took the trouble to write to me about that report. In it he said he had never read any report of a match of his before that recalled to his mind so many shots which he only recollected when he came to read about them ; and that, if only on that account, he should keep it to read again when he was old, and Wimbledon knew him no more.

" Wimbledon will know him no more ;

but of all the brave figures that have passed and are yet to pass through its portals, the name and fame of Tony Wilding will be remembered as long and as affectionately as any."

This from Norman Brookes, the present champion, his last opponent at Wimbledon, and his partner in many an International doubles :

" Without doubt one of the finest specimens of manhood physically, he was blest as well with an ability and steadfastness of character which helped him to reach the highest pinnacle in the lawn tennis world, and his bright, cheery nature made him beloved by all followers of the game.

" As a tennis player he was perhaps seen to best advantage on the hard courts of the Continent ; but take him, year in, year out, on any kind of court, he was easily Number One in the tennis world. Perhaps not so brilliant and spectacular as McLoughlin,

nor so subtle as Roper Barrett, he however possessed that superb correctness in all his stroke production that marked him out as the master player. Tennis followers the world over will mourn his loss, and more especially we in Australasia. I shed a tear in memory of the many happy days we spent together in the struggle for the Davis Cup."

And here is a note from Charles P. Dixon, a former captain of England's International team :

" I always found Wilding a scrupulously fair opponent, and my matches against him will ever occupy a bright spot in my memory. He was the same good sportsman to every one he met, and I shall never forget how good he was when I was lucky enough to beat him both at Stockholm and Surbiton. He would not have it that I had caught him on off-days, though I know in the former case he was not quite fit.[1]

[1] At Surbiton he was feeling ill effects from a motor-cycle spill.

I treasure much his public statement at the dinner, given after the Olympic contest at Stockholm, to the effect that I was the better man on the day. No other adversary would have said that. I admired him intensely both on the court and off, though I did not meet him outside as much as I should have liked. Faults he may have had, but who is there without them ? They only serve to emphasise his splendid character."

Anthony made five bids for the championship before success crowned his efforts. Of course the earliest attempts, those made when he was still an undergraduate, were not considered likely to bear full fruit, either by himself or by others, for mastership at lawn tennis requires a stern apprenticeship. Both in 1905 and 1906 the systematic bombardment of his backhand corner by A. W. Gore, the Nestor of Wimbledon, undermined his defences. But in both years he made a big impression,

in the latter reaching the semi-final. Well do I recollect, as if it were yesterday, his three and a half hours' struggle with W. J. Clothier,[1] the American, on the centre court. Both men were such splendid specimens of youth and vigour, such hard hitters, such gallant fighters. It is a tribute to Anthony's tenacity that Clothier should have been two sets up, five games to two, and 40—15, and yet beaten at the finish. That must have been the longest tie either ever played; certainly it was Anthony's.

In those days, and, in fact, whenever a really important match was in prospect, he trained punctiliously. Of course to one in such perfect health and so little addicted to excesses, the rigours of the prize-ring (for he was almost as careful as a champion boxer) did not inflict any material hardship. Physical training was a part of Anthony's creed; he would have been fretting if he could not have whacked the

[1] Clothier won the American championship at Newport, U.S.A., a couple of months later.

punch-ball, done his bit of daily skipping, anointed his body with spirits of alcohol, undergone his massage. Those preliminaries may appear uncalled for in amateur sport. It is difficult in these days of trench warfare and suspended games to conceive a man spending so much time over the preparation of his body for a pastime. But the class of manhood from which Anthony sprang has demonstrated that these things counted in the great war. Do you suppose that the example which he set in so many pavilions throughout the world did not inspire and benefit many of the young gamesmen who are now fighting, as he fought, for the Empire ?

It was sometimes a matter for comment that immediately the match was over Anthony should pick up his sweater and spare racket at the umpire's chair, and, without dallying at the refreshment bar with his opponent, fly to the dressing-room. This habit, dispensing with conventional courtesies and the usual inquest

on the play, merely illustrated his forceful way of leaving nothing to chance. Seemingly irresponsible, he was in reality most systematic. His mind had been centred on the match while it lasted; immediately afterwards, he looked ahead to the next match, realising the risk of cold and the benefit of quick massage.

Avoiding the hot air of London in late June, Anthony made it a rule to bivouac as near the centre court as possible during the championship week. Indeed, it was always his habit to eschew stuffy houses as much as possible. When he went to Paris for the hard court championship, he slept on the balcony of a little *châlet* at St. Cloud, on the edge of the forest. His love for fresh air was constitutional; if his host had a summer-house, he would fix up some sleeping accommodation in it. The tradition of Fownhope, where every bed is placed on a veranda, was strong in him.

He invariably stayed for the week at Wimbledon with his friends, the Horns,

at Wimbledon Park House. One of the sons was at Cambridge with him, and Mr. Horn was by way of being a sportsman after his own heart—I believe he imported polo into Australia. "Mrs. Horn," Anthony wrote, "would never permit me to go near the beloved motor-cycle. Long before I developed any symptoms of a cold my head was pushed into an eucalyptus bath. All the good things to eat and drink were taboo, nor was I ever allowed to forget bedtime or 7 a.m."

Anthony had a characteristic habit of making every house his castle, but though he was an unconventional guest, and often borrowed articles of attire, there was no home where he was unwelcome, where his presence did not stimulate. When he arrived, dust-laden and flushed from a long motor-cycle journey, he would shed articles of clothing on his way to the bathroom, so that he arrived at that compartment ready for immersion. The servants never grumbled; they were always propitiated

by his humour. Is there not an old butler in a country house in Hertfordshire whom he taught to play lawn tennis, afterwards appearing at dinner in a black pair of trousers belonging to his pupil ?

In 1907 Anthony's path to the championship was barred by Norman Brookes, against whom, after beating Beals Wright in the first round, he fought, and just lost, a fierce match of five sets. Brookes subsequently won the title. These two, afterwards to carry off the Davis Cup to Australasia, secured the doubles championship.

In 1908 Anthony was beaten, and beaten badly, by Roper Barrett in the fifth round. He won the first set, but, lured out of position by a Napoleon of tactics, his relative weakness on the backhand and overhead —defects which he steadily eradicated in the next two years—proved fatal. Barrett ended the rout with a love set.

He was absent from England in New Zealand, as we have seen, the following year, but in 1910, arriving from Johannes-

burg with the South African championship and with an earlier victory over Brookes at Melbourne as signs of progress, he renewed the campaign with high hopes. One may assume certain misgivings when the draw disclosed that his opponent in the first round was none other than Roper Barrett, the man who had so successfully outwitted him in his last championship match at Wimbledon. Nor were his chances of turning the tables improved by the fact that Barrett, persistently challenging his overhead powers, lobbed into the sun. However, after some travail, he got through that match safely, and his relief was reflected in the enormous zest which he threw into the succeeding rounds. Indeed, he beat one player in three sets without losing a single game. Froitzheim, the German champion, who had beaten an untrained Anthony at Homburg two years earlier, was routed in three short sets, and a victory over J. C. Parke put him into the final. Here he was faced with a very stiff

proposition—the American, Beals Wright, whose left-handed volleying genius had overcome him two years previously in a Davis Cup tie at Melbourne. The quid-nuncs favoured Wright, but Anthony, displaying superior physical resources, and outlasting his opponent, was not to be denied. He lost the first two sets and won the next three. Beals Wright showed that he was resourceful enough, a sufficiently brilliant player and astute tactician to beat Wilding in a three-set match ; but in a longer match, his methods drained physical reserves too severely to ensure success against a player so well endowed with ground strokes that his excursions to the net could become the crown rather than the basis of his attack. The result proved, in short, that the all-round player, given condition and temperament, will win in the long run.

In the round which was to decide the championship Anthony met A. W. Gore, and defeated him by three sets to one. The match was not without its anxieties. Driv-

ing with splendid vigour, Gore opened with a 4—1 lead. But Anthony was wonderfully alert and vigilant. He knocked off this deficit, took the first set at 6—4, and a very close second at 7—5. He would doubtless have run out in the third had not the heavens intervened when he was leading 4—2. A violent thunderstorm interrupted play, and when it was resumed the veteran had recovered his energy, while Anthony, the championship snatched from his grasp, was like a deflated tyre. Six games in succession, a love set, went to Gore, always quick to rise to the occasion. It seemed that a dramatic change was in prospect, but in the fourth set, on a drying court, Anthony recovered both his foothold and his confidence. He lost but two games.

In a few hours' time a cable bearing the good news reached Christchurch. It was a great day both there and in New Zealand generally. Even the Prime Minister wired his congratulations. You may think the fuss exaggerated, but Wilding was the

first son of New Zealand to win high fame at Wimbledon, and the pride of the Dominion in its children is not measured in ordinary terms.

For the three subsequent years Anthony defended his title against all comers. He all but lost it in 1911 to his old *bête noire*, Roper Barrett. Indeed, the result of the challenge round was somewhat inconclusive, for the challenger retired after each man had won two sets. The wonder is that the match lasted as long as it did. The heat was so oppressive, the air so enervating in that centre court oven, that the linen collars of the linesmen were turned into pulp. Barrett had undoubtedly suffered severely from his exertions in earlier rounds. Anthony was handicapped by the fact that he had not enjoyed the stimulant of playing through. Moreover, the adroit tactics employed by Barrett—he would entice Wilding to the net with a short drop, and then send him panting back to recover a deep lob—were not

calculated to please a player who had been practising against orthodox fast drives. Barrett's campaign was quite legitimate, if monotonous to watch; but it exacted its penalty and left its author a spent force at the end of four sets. This was one of those matches in which both men, thoroughly exhausted, endeavoured to conceal their condition from the other. Anthony confessed afterwards that he was thoroughly cooked; on Barrett's part there was no need for a confession.

In 1912 it was widely anticipated that Anthony's challenger would be A. H. Gobert, the brilliant young French player who had only the previous month defeated the champion in the covered court challenge round [1] at Queen's, and subsequently won the Olympic gold medal at Stockholm. But Gobert on grass was not quite the

[1] A memorable and thrilling match. A. F. W. won the first two sets, but lost the next two, and was led four-love in the fifth; he then pulled up to four all, only to lose the next two games and the match.

same irresistible antagonist as Gobert on wood. Gore beat him in the final, and once more, at the age of forty-four, this youthful veteran entered the challenge round. He put up a fight characteristically stubborn, and won one set in four. Wilding's defences, however, were now much less vulnerable than when Gore penetrated them with that long, low drive in the earlier years, while his attacking powers had increased. Most people were glad that Anthony retained the championship that year, because he had chivalrously offered to inaugurate a new era at Wimbledon by "playing through" instead of standing out to meet the winner of the All Comers'. That his offer was not accepted was no fault of his ; but it was at least satisfactory that the man who had all to lose and nothing material to gain by making it, in the event lost nothing material by it.

In the challenge round of 1913 Anthony was to play the best game of his life. His opponent was M. E. McLoughlin, the

American champion, whose progress to the last round, after a narrow escape from defeat by Roper Barrett on the first day, had aroused widespread interest and drawn an unprecedented crowd to Wimbledon. Over seven thousand people were on the ground. Hundreds were turned away from the gates; other hundreds only saw the scoring-board; it is said that Americans paid ten pounds for a seat.[1] The betting, what there was of it, was slightly in favour of the American—why, I could never tell. On their last meeting—at Sydney, in 1909—Wilding had beaten McLoughlin by three sets to one. The latter had, of course, strengthened his game, and especially his service, in the interval, but Wilding had not stood still. Nor was the fact remembered that only a few weeks before in Paris the champion had enjoyed, in opposing Gobert,

[1] Indeed, it was no secret that the challenge round was changed from Saturday to Friday partly because the executive, influenced by regard for club property, and the comfort of seat-holders, could not face the prospect of a Saturday crowd without misgiving.

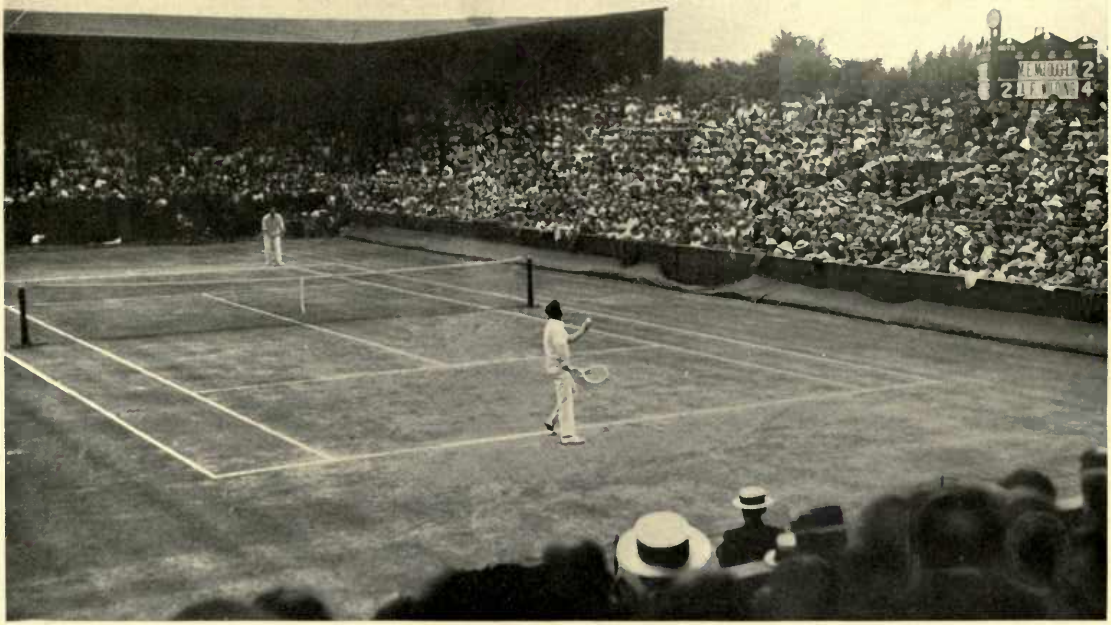
just that kind of practice against an attacking volleyer armed with a destructive service that was so essential. I ventured to express to some of my friends (and in print) the conviction that Wilding would win.

Anthony beat McLoughlin in three sets.[1] Roughly speaking, the story of the contest may be divided into three chapters, each with a moral of its own. The plot did not thicken until McLoughlin had won the first two games with the loss of only one ace. His first two service returns, perfect forehand lifting drives, threw the Americans into transports of joy. Anthony accepted this early sign of battle, as he accepted McLoughlin's four unreturnable services in the next game, with the cold eyes of a man who sees danger and is prepared to meet it. In four minutes he was level at two all. He had shown, first, that his own service, pitched persistently to McLoughlin's backhand, had its distinctive value; secondly, that he possessed the skill and

[1] 8—6, 6—3, 10—8.

resource to return McLoughlin's own service. The American got to 4—2 and then to 5—3, but his service did not intimidate Wilding in the slightest. Then, when Wilding drew level at 5 all, and forged ahead at 6—5, incidentally winning McLoughlin's service for the second time, the character of the whole match, the road which the champion would take to victory, the weapons of attack and defence he would use, and the great task which lay before his opponent were revealed.

There were other factors besides the service. One of them was the relative weakness of McLoughlin's backhand, especially visible when the rally, so to speak, had been launched on the high seas. Then Wilding's experienced seamanship told. He seemed to know that in McLoughlin's backhand he had a safe port in a storm could he but steer in that direction. Thither his compass was ever pointed; he attacked it in service, on the return of service, throughout the rally. If, by accident, when



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WIMBLEDON, 1913: DEFEATING M. E. MCLOUGHLIN, THE AMERICAN CHAMPION, IN THE CHALLENGE ROUND.

brought to the net, he volleyed to McLoughlin's forehand, the point scored against him emphasised his folly; the lesson was learnt. In finding this loophole Wilding showed remarkable firmness and coolness in every department. McLoughlin was on the same track, endeavouring to penetrate Wilding's backhand; consequently, upon the latter's weaker side a severe strain was imposed. His backhand came splendidly through the ordeal. With its aid he made many low passing shots as McLoughlin ran in; with it he ventured down the line; with it he lobbed, and so perfectly that McLoughlin's smashing powers were nullified.

In the second set Wilding was always master of the court. He led 4—1, and was out, a strong winner, at 6—3. The remarkable accuracy of his service returns, the fact that McLoughlin was repeatedly called upon to pick up balls at his feet, seemed to demoralise the challenger.

But there was plenty of fight in the

American yet. He made another bold bid for power in the third set. After Wilding led 4—2 and 40—15, McLoughlin served three balls which took him to 'vantage, and ultimately saved the game. For a moment, his tide to fortune checked, Wilding seemed to falter. McLoughlin paraded all his volleying arts, made three deadly smashes in succession, and, catching Wilding, led 5—4. From now till the end of the match, delayed for nine games, both men fought with the grim levelness of the first set. Wilding was ahead at 7—6; McLoughlin at 8—7. In the eighteenth game, when within a point of victory, the holder was foot-faulted. It was a great test of nerves, but his determination was in no way shaken. From deuce he went to 'vantage. Then, in running to save a certain winner, McLoughlin fell. It was the last episode in a great struggle.

Highly keyed up and mentally concentrated as Anthony was in all his matches, in this one he exhibited superb confidence

and unbroken determination. The reason for this extra "grit," I think, was this—that every American[1] and a great many Englishmen predicted his defeat. To prove that they had reckoned without the tough fibre of New Zealand was a great incentive.

If 1913 brought a record crowd to Wimbledon, 1914 was to attract even greater attention. In the intervening twelve months, the volume of public interest in spectacular lawn tennis had, as a result of McLoughlin's coming, expanded until every class of society was affected. When Norman Brookes came over from Australia to regain the championship which he had won seven years previously, the prospect of a big Wimbledon was assured. Nor was the expectation unfulfilled. Larger crowds than ever flocked down the Worple Road; the coming battle between Brookes and Wilding was eagerly anticipated. An accident nearly happened. In the final of the All Comers, Brookes was so severely pressed by Froitz-

[1] Except his friend, Craig Biddle, I think.

heim that he only squeezed home, greatly exhausted, after 'vantage games in the fifth set. The German had made a plucky fight, and did not enjoy the best of luck. Heavy rain on the Friday allowed the challenger to recoup his physical energies before engaging the holder.

Several explanations have been offered for Anthony's surprising defeat in the last match which he was destined to play on the centre court. Some of them were wide of the mark. It has been suggested, for example, that both men were at their best and that Brookes displayed a superiority of strategy and stroke which clearly entitled him to victory. Unquestionably the challenger played a masterly game with great skill and endurance. His triumph was thoroughly well deserved on the day's play. But that is not the whole story. After his triumphs in 1913,[1] when he may be said to have reached the zenith of his lawn tennis

[1] In this year he won all three "world's" championships—on grass, wood, and sand courts.

career, Anthony's absorbing interest in the game began to slacken. He had business trials, as we shall see presently, and there were influences at work which made him anxious to devote more time to the serious affairs of life. He did not train for the defence of his title in 1914 with so much zest or punctilio as he had shown in previous years. It may be that having twice defeated Brookes fairly decisively on the Riviera in the spring, he imagined that as much training was not necessary, and possibly his over-confidence, if it were over-confidence, was stimulated by the views of his friends. They predicted almost with one voice that he would win. Thus he came into court not so well equipped physically and mentally as he ought to have been, or as he probably would have been had the circumstances been different. There was a lack of agility, of *verve*, and of concentration about his game which showed that something was wrong. It may be that the amazing confidence of his opponent exercised some

disintegrating effect on his own plan of campaign. I recollect how impressed he had been previously with Brookes' mental attitude. "Norman is perfectly sure," he would say, "both before and during a match that nothing but some dreadful catastrophe could ever cheat him of victory."

He took his defeat,[1] as he took every defeat, with perfect composure, without a single sign of petulance. An old friend of mine, Mr. David Williamson, who was standing in the crowd behind the umpire's chair when the players left the court, observed the following incident: "An impulsive lady buttonholed Brookes and asked him to autograph his portrait. Brookes might well have declined, for he was pretty well spent. Wilding, overhearing the request, offered at once his back for Brookes to sign the picture. I thought it was a typically chivalrous act in the moment of what must have been bitter defeat." Mr. Williamson

[1] Brookes won, 6—4, 6—4, 7—5.

also mentions that on the day of the match, when spectators standing in the queue outside Wimbledon found it excessively hot, Wilding arrived on his motor, and expressed his sorrow that he could not take them all into the ground then and there.

Within ten minutes of the match—for there was no need for extended massage now—Anthony, smiling and at ease, might have been seen carrying a tea-tray, appropriated from the kitchen, over the crowded lawns to a party of friends. He did not utter a word of mortification or regret, though I very well know that his disappointment was keen. He took a rebuff as a rub of the green. I like to think that his last visit to Wimbledon—for he sailed for America a few days later—revealed him in the very best light—that of a perfect sportsman.

WIMBLEDON, 1914: TEA WITH MR. BALFOUR.
(*By permission of the "Field."*)

A. W. M. *A. F. W.* *A. H. Gobert.* *Craig Biddle.*

PARIS, 1914: THE HARD COURT CHAMPIONSHIPS.
(*Photo by R. M. Kidston.*)

VIII

DAVIS CUP MEMORIES

No survey of Anthony's career on the lawn tennis court would be complete without some reference to those occasions on which, the representative of Australasia, he competed in the Davis Cup competition. Those International matches, to which no personal prize was attached, always appealed to him. They tended to promote fraternity among the athletic nations of the world; not only to bind the units of the British Empire closer together, but, through the medium of a common sport, to strengthen the bonds of fellowship which linked one civilised country to the other. Germany held aloof from the Davis Cup, and rarely entered the arena. America, France, and Belgium were among its earliest and remained its most

faithful supporters. Russia had no team quite strong enough to press a challenge, but in the last year or two no less than eight countries were represented.

Anthony always took a broad outlook on sport, as he did on life. This cosmopolitan interest in an annual competition, which generated friendship and fostered mutual understanding, which was always a clean and wholesome tournament free from any taint of private interest, inspired his zeal and sympathy. Between them Wilding and the Davis Cup did much for lawn tennis, and, through its medium, something for sporting chivalry and all that it implies in the world at large.

Anthony's first appearance for Australasia was more or less fortuitous. When the first challenge came from Melbourne, he was an undergraduate at Cambridge, twenty-one years of age. Norman Brookes, the first string in the prospective team, was coming to England on a private trip, its main purpose the winning of the champion-

ship at Wimbledon. These two—with A. W. Dunlop as a partner for Brookes in the doubles, and H. A. Parker, another visitor to this country, as reserve—were nominated to represent Australasia. Wilding had not met Brookes then, and the alliance which they established with such success later had not then begun. But the Australasian captain had sufficient confidence in the powers of the young Cantab to give him a place in the singles at Queen's. It was in the second round, against Austria, that Anthony met for the first time that hurricane hitter C. von Wesseley, whom he defeated with the loss of one set. In the same manner he disposed of Kinzl, and his country was thus able to triumph by five matches to love. A few days later Australasia opposed America. Wilding had as much stamina as either Beals Wright or Larned, but at that time not enough courtcraft ; he did not win a set against either. It was the promise he gave of future greatness, rather than the actual achievement,

which made Anthony's first appearance in the Davis Cup notable.

In the following year, 1906, Australasia challenged again, but in the absence of Brookes it was not expected they would go far. Nevertheless, at industrial Newport in early June, they pressed America closely, and only lost the day by the odd match in five. Anthony won both his singles; he had made material progress in the twelve months. His match with Holcombe Ward was one of the most exciting of his career, for the American, aided by superior strategy, led in the fifth set, and only the grim tenacity of his opponent frustrated his bid for victory. Against R. D. Little he won in three sets. L. O. S. Poidevin, withdrawn from the cricket field as Australasia's second string, was short of practice, and therefore Anthony's double success in the singles failed to pull his country through.

The finish of this contest will remain in my memory. Anthony and his father, then on a visit to England, left the ground

before it was over. The former had planned a lightning trip to Prague and was anxious to catch the Continental boat-train that night; but when we entered the London train at Newport, Poidevin was still battling with Little in the deciding tie. If Poidevin won, the Wildings could not go to Austria, for the younger would be required at Wimbledon to oppose England in the challenge round. I had arranged for a telegram giving the result to be sent to Swindon, where we stopped *en route* to Paddington. Anthony was torn by conflicting emotions during the journey. He wanted his country to win; at the same time he was eagerly anticipating the pleasure of piloting his father across the Continent. As it happened, Poidevin was beaten, and Anthony hustled his father into a cab with so much celerity at Paddington—they had only twenty minutes to get across to Charing Cross—that the luggage was left behind in the van and his overcoat on the arm of a porter. And even then they did

not catch the train. Those were the days before taxi-cabs, and the days when Anthony's energy was absolutely irrepressible.

In 1907 Brookes was back in this country, and Anthony assisted him to win the Davis Cup for Australasia. The two matches of this year, first against America in the qualifying tie, and then against England in the challenge round, were strenuous and exciting. In both Australasia only won by the odd tie in five. Indeed, in the American match, if Anthony had not kept his head and shown great fortitude when Karl Behr held a winning lead in the fourth set, having won two out of the first three, even that narrow margin would not have been secured. Subsequently Anthony was beaten by Beals Wright in a long four-set match; he had not then acquired the secret of defeating so crafty a volleyer. As Brookes won both his singles with something to spare, the result was not vitally influenced by the victory of Wright and Behr over

Brookes and Wilding in the doubles.[1] These teams had met previously in the final of the championship, when the Australasians won; but the Americans did not then unmask all their guns. There was one terrific set, the second, in this match, which yielded twenty-two games. The Australasians led 3—1, but by a steadily improving combination and astute lobbing their opponents squared the set and held on to win. Both Brookes and Wilding lost vital service games in the fourth and fifth sets.

In the challenge round of that year England was without the Dohertys or S. H. Smith to defend the cup; they had to fall back on A. W. Gore and Roper Barrett. These seasoned players put up a remarkably good fight. To his great satisfaction, Anthony beat Barrett on the first day, after losing the first set, in which the Englishman's legerdemain ruffled him. Superior physique had an important bearing on the result; but in his second single

[1] America won 3—6, 12—10, 4—6, 6—2, 6—3.

Anthony had to bow before the storm of Gore's fierce drives. He attempted to play the veteran at his own game without having a sufficiently strong backhand. As Brookes won both his singles, Wilding's success over Barrett was sufficient to give Australasia the verdict.

The doubles match, as in the American contest, was most thrilling. Indeed, few finer have been played at Wimbledon. Australasia won the first two sets, and seemed certain, when only a single service from Brookes separated them from victory, to triumph in three sets; but their older opponents, who had won many a forlorn hope in the past, not only survived that crisis, but won the next three sets and the match. The final set ran to 13—11. It was marked by a four-love lead and the capture of Brookes's service on the part of Gore and Barrett, then a fine rally on the part of the visitors which brought them level, and then such a ding-dong battle to snatch the opposing service as

has rarely been seen on the centre court. Almost every game ran to deuce; the tension was remarkable. In the last game Anthony lost his service through the agency of his partner's too eager volleying, and the die was cast.

The centre of Davis Cup gravity now shifted to the other side of the world. Australasia had won the cup, and was called upon to defend it on her own courts. The challengers in 1908 were America, who had defeated England at Boston. Beals Wright and F. B. Alexander invaded Melbourne to engage Brookes and Wilding. The first Davis Cup match in Australia, this contest generated great public interest, initiating thousands into the spectacular virtues of first-class lawn tennis.

Coming out from England, Anthony went to Brookes's home on the fringe of Melbourne for preliminary training, carried out systematically and with great thoroughness. Brookes had a "difficult inside," and it was part of Anthony's functions to see that

his captain did not abuse his physique. As he himself put it, " Norman had to be very carefully handled, for the slightest over-exertion knocked him up." However, the following daily programme was faithfully fulfilled :

7 a.m.—Up and a cup of tea ; walk and a little running
8.30 a.m.—Practice.
11 a.m.—Some stroke practice, and then three, four, or sometimes five sets against each other, as hard as we could go.
1.30 p.m.—Lunch.
2.30 p.m.—Possibly three sets of doubles, or some stroke practice. If smashing had been weak, it received special attention.

" Skipping, running, or a little game with the wall," added Anthony, " ended the athletic day. Two baths and a good deal of massage, and to bed at 10.15. We ate any-

thing within reason, and as a rule drank barley water, but in this respect we were not rigidly particular, and sometimes a very little light beer was consumed. The difficulty, of course, was to practise for one hour and a half in a broiling sun, with the thermometer over 95° Fahr., and then confine oneself to one glass of fluid in the middle of the day."

The actual match was worthy of the intense enthusiasm created. The result of every tie except the last was in doubt almost until the last stroke. On the first day Brookes beat Alexander in a five-set match, and Beals Wright, by adroit drops and lobs, drained Anthony's resources and had him squarely beaten at the finish. The thermometer was soaring somewhere in the direction of 100° Fahr., and a hot north wind added to the distress of the players.

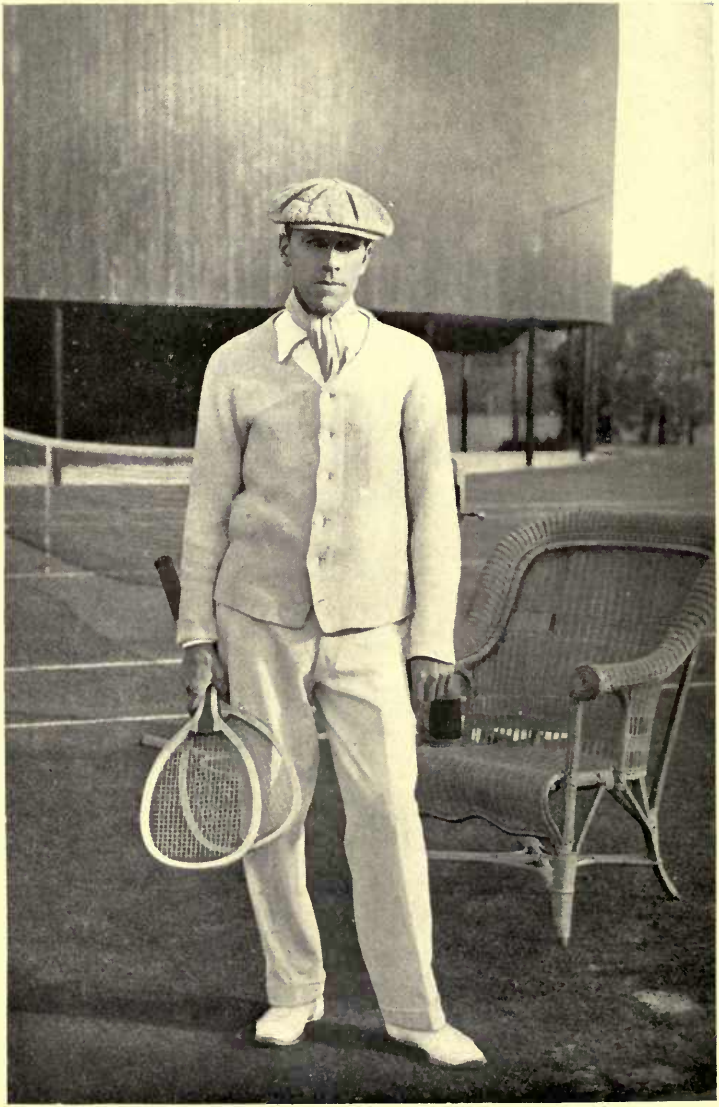
The whole contest, as so often happened, turned on the doubles, as fine and gallant a fight between four men in first-class fettle as has been witnessed in the whole Davis

Cup series. Indeed, several years after, Anthony, in looking back over his lawn tennis career, confessed to me that this was the best double in which he had ever taken part. Certainly this victory gave him supreme satisfaction, for it meant the retention of the cup by Australasia. At first it seemed probable that the home side would win in three sets; with two sets in hand they led 5—4 in the third. Here is how Mr. R. M. Kidston describes[1] the dénouement:

"At two sets all, two games to love, Alexander serving and Brookes seemingly done, and making frequent errors, Australasia's hopes were small indeed. Till then, Wilding's fine play almost alone had saved us; but at that moment of crisis the real Brookes reappeared, and from then onwards was again the supreme master.

"Who that saw it will forget the final game of that double? Wilding was

[1] *Lawn Tennis in Australasia.*



Photo] [Trim.

N. E. Brookes, his Australasian Partner.

serving at 5—4. Australasia leads, and 40—15 was called. He served a double fault, and a universal 'Oh!' echoed through the arena. Wright scored with a smash. Deuce. Brookes netted. 'Vantage to America. A magnificent rally followed, and in it Wright fell. Alexander, close in, alone played his two opponents. Jumping from side to side like a cat, three times he volleyed fine volleys of his opponents, and at length netted a magnificent lift-drive by Wilding the overspin of which made it dive for the ground. He actually held his own till Wright, unperceived by him, had recovered his feet after his fall. Again America got the 'vantage, but Brookes scored with a fine interception, and again Brookes intercepted, smashing hard to the corner; and now Alexander fell in a tremendous effort to reach the ball, and slid into the side boards with a resounding bump as he failed, and then Wright tossed, and breathless we watched the ball hover and just go over the base-line."

As proof of the excellent sportmanship which, despite the keen rivalry and importance attached to the result, prevailed during this match, Anthony mentions that " our drinks, very necessary in 102° Fahr., were common property. Any little doubt about decisions was settled amicably by the players themselves. We never resorted to that most painful of episodes, an argument between umpires and players in the middle of a match."

On the third day, Beals Wright, in perhaps his most memorable triumph, beat Brookes in a fifth set which yielded twenty-two games—at the finish both men could scarcely drag a foot across the court. Anthony was carried shoulder-high to the pavilion when he had defeated Alexander in the deciding tie. The great double had devitalised the American, and his opponent, playing with great confidence, had a comparatively easy win.

The challenge round at Sydney the following year calls for little mention, except

that it introduced McLoughlin, a red-haired youngster from California, to the Australian crowd. The American " boys " (McLoughlin was accompanied by Melville Long) were not expected to do more than twist the tail of the kangaroo, but they made Brookes and Wilding go all the way, especially in the doubles, which was quite a level combat.

Our narrative may be diverted here for a moment, to consider the relative merits of Brookes and Wilding as singles players, and their relative power as a doubles combination. There is little doubt that Brookes had more inherent genius as a champion than his great rival. He was the artist, Anthony was the athlete. As a server and a volleyer the latter never approached the master. Brookes may be described as a born player, although he remodelled one or two important departments before his great eminence was reached. Wilding was essentially a player brought to maturity by assiduous practice,

the eradication of fundamental faults, the careful protection of his splendid physique. Nevertheless, in a series of matches played under first-class conditions, with both men in good health, it is probable that Wilding would have had a majority of victories to his credit, for, in order to hold his opponent, he did not need to impose so great a strain on his system. He had more endurance than Brookes; he was safer at the back of the court. On a hard surface, on a Continental court, where the uniform high bound allowed him to make full use of his great forehand lifting drive, he was invincible, and beat Brookes as he beat everybody else. Conditions of play change so materially that it is difficult to place either Brookes or Wilding definitely in relation to the Dohertys. My own belief is —and it is shared by others—that Wilding, as he played against McLoughlin in 1913, would, in a five-set match, have defeated any other player who has ever been seen on the centre court.

As a pair, Brookes and Wilding were not an infallibly balanced combination, and it is probable that, lacking consistent cohesion, and liable to show spasms of unexpected weakness in a long match, they would have been overcome by the perfect union of the Doherty brothers. Nevertheless, there were tournaments—notably Beckenham of 1914—when the fine aggressive service of Brookes, the magnificent service returns of both units, the lobbing skill of Wilding, the uncanny volleying of Brookes, proved in combination absolutely overwhelming. At this meeting they revealed themselves in a different class to pairs like Dixon and Dunlop and Gore and Roper Barrett. Brookes and Wilding won the doubles championship at Wimbledon on the two occasions they entered the lists in partnership. The fact that Anthony in two other years won the title with Ritchie, a player of a very different type and temperament to Brookes, goes a long way to expose the fallacy that

Wilding was not a sound doubles player. Singles was his speciality, and the department for which his strenuous and independent character was the better suited, but his record in doubles, in all parts of the world, is much too fine to be passed over lightly.

Anthony's next appearance in the Davis Cup contest was in 1914, his last lawn tennis year. There were no matches in 1910, and from 1911 to 1913 his movements were governed by business ties. He could go neither to Christchurch, his native town, in 1911, to Melbourne the following year, nor to New York in 1913, when Australasia re-entered the qualifying competition.

But in July, 1914, after the championships at Wimbledon had been cornered by the Australasians, Anthony and Norman Brookes, with Dunlop and Doust as reserves, set out for America in quest of the International championship. Anthony had received many invitations to visit America, and had been anxious in the past to accept

some of them ; but I do not think that he crossed the Atlantic with a very light heart. For one thing, his thoughts were now turning to the more serious affairs of life ; for another, the strain of these big contests, involving so much systematic training and concentration, had begun to temper even his great enthusiasm. A man has to be very young and keen to face with impunity the prospect of a long and tiring sporting campaign in modern America. Anthony, then only thirty, was in the prime of manhood, but his boyish zest for tournaments had evaporated. I believe at this period he was more interested in a friendly " knock-up " on a country house court than in an exacting first-class match conducted before the public gaze.

Apart from this lack of what one may call " match enthusiasm " Anthony's American tour was conducted under the shadow of the great war. Disquieting rumours were in circulation when his party arrived on the other side. At Chicago,

during the Canadian match, the clouds were coming up, and at Pittsburg a week later, when the Germans were opposed, the European sky was dark and threatening. Nevertheless, when I reached the Allegheny Country Club near Pittsburg, the scene of the German contest, I found gathered under its hospitable roof a very friendly band of guests. Anthony had discovered an American motor which took his fancy, and, between his bouts of training, was sandwiching in some hill-climbing experiments. Brookes and Dunlop were enjoying recreative golf. The members of the German team, Froitzheim and Kreuzer, were, when the hot day was over, in popular demand as dancing partners. Germany might be launching *ultimata* in Europe ; there was no sign that her two lawn tennis envoys desired to fight anybody—except with a racket.

There was some speculation as to whether the Pittsburg match would take place. At that time—the last days of July—Great Britain was not actually a belligerent ; but

since Froitzheim and Kreuzer were both in the army reserve, the former as an officer, they consulted their consul in Pittsburg. Much to their relief, and to that of the American executive, who had erected giant stands and sold hundreds of seats, that official did not order the Germans back to the Fatherland immediately. While the newsboys were announcing the opening of the world war, here, amid the torrid hills of Pennsylvania, the races so soon to be in deadly conflict engaged in a quiet lawn tennis match. And I confess the incongruity never occurred to anybody, least of all to the players concerned. You see, sport promoted good fellowship ; we were thousands of miles away from the Prussian autocracy. Nor, when the match was over, and August had been entered, was there any resentment towards this particular pair of Germans. I remember that Anthony chaffed Froitzheim, as he left to catch the boat at New York, on the prospect of a bayonet tussle on the courts at

Homburg, which both of them knew so well. The grim irony of that Country Club banter often occurs to me now. Little did either imagine then that the one would be a prisoner of war in England [1] for many months, the other blown to pieces by a German shell in France.

After the Australasians had beaten Germany at Pittsburg—Anthony did not lose a set either in singles or doubles—the team proceeded to Boston for the English match. Some members of the party, including myself, took in the Niagara Falls *en route*; but Brookes and Wilding, more leisurely inclined, made the direct journey. Practice games at Longwood were punctuated by sinister reports from Europe. One member of the English team, "Algy" Kingscote,[2] who was a gunner in the

[1] Froitzheim and Kreuzer were intercepted by a British warship on their way from New York to Genoa in an Italian liner. They were interned at Gibraltar, and subsequently brought to England, Froitzheim to enjoy the amenities of Donington Hall.

[2] Captain A. R. F. Kingscote.

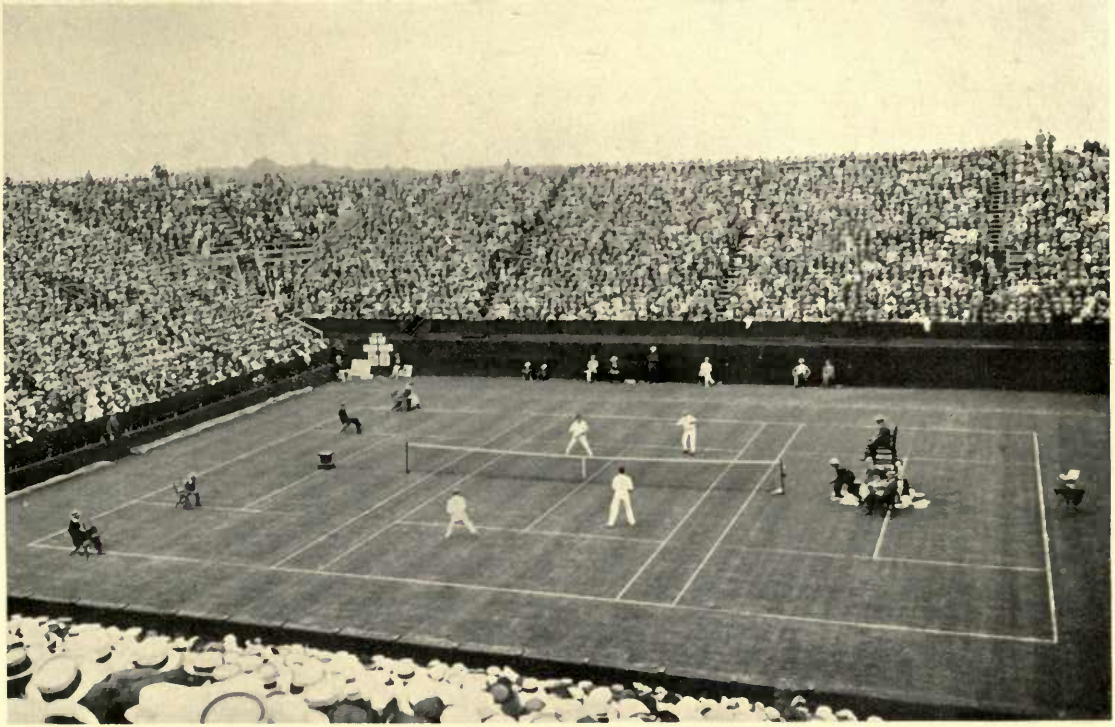
regular Army, had to leave before the match started; those remaining [1] were naturally not fully tuned up for strenuous play. Perhaps the English team suffered in this respect more than the Australasians; to them the opening war seemed a little nearer home. But the play was affected all round. Only two singles were contested, both long and somewhat uninspiring matches, although Parke came within an ace of defeating Norman Brookes. Anthony played a third set of thirty games against A. H. Lowe. I had never seen him so cooked in a public match. The heat, the need of chasing Lowe's drives from corner to corner, and the war anxiety, seemed to sap his energies. When the doubles had been won, and the result assured, on the next day, the rest of the programme was abandoned.

Anthony was panting for a tonic after

[1] Captain J. C. Parke, Captain A. H. Lowe, and Major T. M. Mavrogordato, all of whom joined the Army on returning to England.

Boston. He rang me up at my hotel and suggested we should post off at once to a seaside resort on Long Island, within easy reach of the coming challenge round in New York. I agreed, and we arranged to meet at the station in an hour's time. Unluckily I was held up by the American baggage system, and missed him, reaching New York several hours later—too late to get out to Long Beach. On the morrow I set out to track him down. The porter at the only decent hotel in the place offered to "page" Anthony for me. He had taken a room, and was probably in it now! Of course I was ready to bet that Anthony was not confined in a hotel bedroom on a fine, sunny, sea-breezy morning. And so it proved. I found out afterwards that he had hired a motor and gone off on an expedition along the coast.

Over twelve thousand people saw Anthony play his last public matches in New York, but they did not see Anthony at his best. The August heat, moist and



Photo] [Underwood.

HIS LAST LAWN TENNIS VICTORY: DAVIS CUP DOUBLE, NEW YORK, AUGUST, 1914.

devitalising, was like a Turkish bath even for the spectators. The turf, inclined to be soft, though perfectly true, did not suit his game. The war, now broadening—seeming, as I cannot help thinking now, to beckon him—was mentally distracting. But he played well enough to beat R. N. Williams on the first day without the loss of a set, and on the second day was the best of the four in a not very brilliant double, the result of which, as it proved, gave Australasia the cup.

On the third day, in the last match of his life, Anthony met McLoughlin, who had previously beaten Brookes after a tremendous fight. Anthony knew that the cup was then secure, for Brookes had beaten Williams in the first single. He did not seem to be concentrating all the time. The machine was wound up, but it worked in spasms. He played with nothing like the same sustained power and absorption exhibited against McLoughlin at Wimbledon a year earlier. This is not

to detract from the American's victory. After winning the first two sets and losing the third, McLoughlin took advantage of the seven minutes' interval, customary in America, to remobilise his forces. In the fifth set he hit clean through Anthony's defences. Nevertheless, the American Wilding was not quite the alert, indomitable Wilding of Europe. He was just a little stale, just a little surfeited with the rigours of the game. But of this the American spectators saw nothing. Then, as always, Anthony betrayed no trace of petulance on court.

IX

WOOD-PULP

ANTHONY WILDING was not made for office chains, nor could he wear them willingly. His arresting figure, honest face, and frank humour were qualities which had their agent's value. His determination and resource would have been useful after adequate experience. But his individuality was too pronounced, his love for the open air and his hatred of restraint too deeply rooted, to make him a happy or an adaptable subordinate. For the diplomacy of business, for the patient spade-work which prepares the ground for a favourable deal, for commercial rites and office formalities, he was unsuited by nature. Initiation and

enterprise he had in plenty, a large measure of common sense and shrewdness, an ability to lead and much will-power. These qualities were of conspicuous service in the branch of the fighting forces which he joined; had he lived, they would have gained him quick promotion. But he was not a good man of business, nor did he really care for business.

Two considerations induced Anthony to approach Mr. C. T. Craig, father of Archie Craig, his Cambridge friend, and seek a position in the firm of Messrs. Henderson, Craig & Company, Ltd., wood-pulp merchants of London, Manchester, and Edinburgh. The first was to remain in Europe; a disinclination to intern himself in New Zealand as a barrister. The second was to earn an income which would enable him to marry. Mr. Craig's son was not attached to the business; Mr. Craig liked Anthony; there was a good opening for him, with a directorship in prospect.

Messrs. Henderson, Craig & Company had a sound reputation and wide connections. They had been intimately associated with the growth of the wood-pulp trade since the time when it began to assume special importance as a factor in the British paper-making industry. They imported the first complete cargo of wood-pulp to Manchester via the ship-canal in 1894 ; since then, their activities had been steadily increasing. Moreover—and here the scent of travel must have appealed to Anthony—they had influential ties at the sources of wood-pulp supply, notably in Sweden. To their transactions in the wood-pulp and paper trades the company added an extensive business as tallow merchants, exporting large quantities of this commodity to the Continent.

Anthony entered commercial life in July, 1911, immediately after he had won the championship at Wimbledon for the second time. I received the following note from him in that month :

"SPRING GROVE MILLS, OUGHTYBRIDGE,
NR. SHEFFIELD.
"*July* 12, 1911.

". . . At the present time I am a member of the firm of Henderson, Craig & Co., and am at this moment here on their business. I am and intend working hard. Possibly tennis is easier to me, but beggars can't be choosers."

A month later he wrote :

"67–69, WATLING STREET, E.C.,
"*August* 10, 1911.

" Where are you, you old devil ? Would like to have a talk to you. For the time being I have quite given up serious tennis for business, and am not returning to Australia or New Zealand for the Davis Cup. Between you and I, I like my new work very much indeed, better than playing tennis. If you will give me an idea when you will be at Ashtead, I will try to run over and see you."

His company had a branch office in Man-

chester, and Anthony took rooms in Bowdon. It is a marvel that he settled down in this industrial district as long as he did, for the life, in view of his previous environment, cannot have been congenial. But he was always cheerful and sanguine. One heard of him engaging in boxing bouts at a Y.M.C.A. hostel, chastising the punch-ball in his bedroom, tinkering with motor-cycles. Of lawn tennis he had virtually none—only an occasonal week-end knock on Mr. X. E. Casdagli's hard court at Kersal. Some idea of his mind at this period may be gauged from a letter which he wrote to Mr. Fisher in New Zealand—it was to introduce Mr. Craig, who was going out on a health voyage :

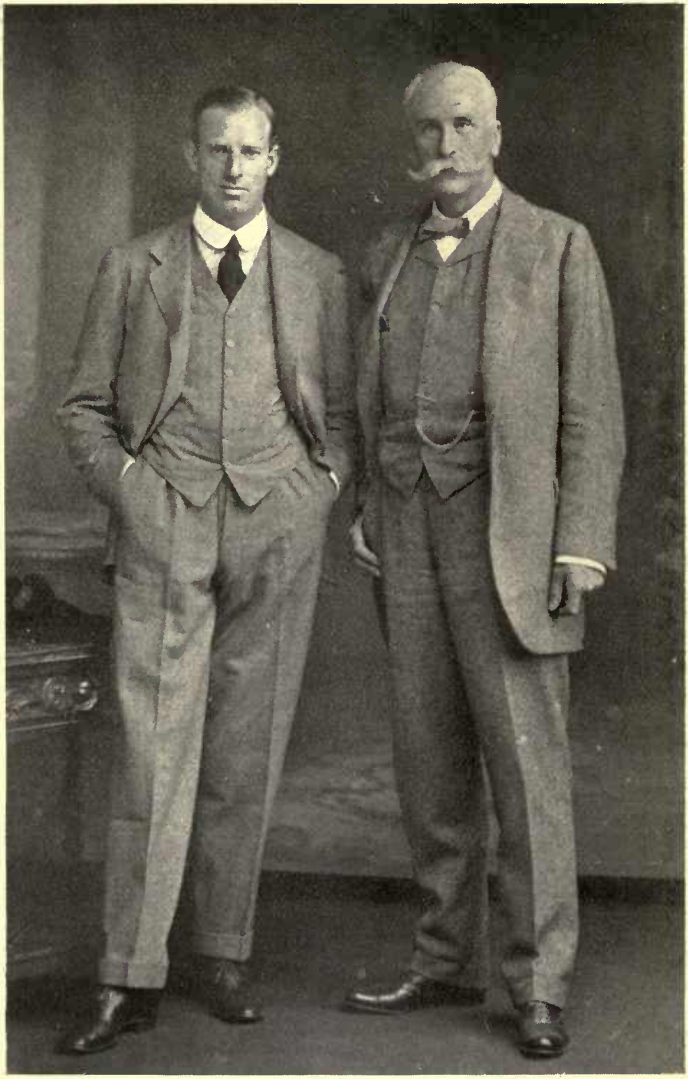
"4, HIGHER DOWNS, BOWDON, CHESHIRE,
"*October* 12, 1911.

"MY DEAR FISHER,

"I am going to ask you a great favour. I do not contemplate that you will find it very unpleasant, even if you are good enough to do it for me. I may as well

begin at the beginning. For ten years or more I have known, fairly intimately, one Mr. Craig—his son was for a short time at Cambridge with me. Mr. Craig's business is Wood Pulp and Paper, and he is nearly sole proprietor of one of the oldest and certainly most honest firms in this business. For several years it has always been understood that I might, if so minded, go into his business. Thus it came to pass that the Monday after the championships ended I presented myself in the City and have been at it ever since. My quarters are Manchester, and it takes me all my time to love it all as much as I know I ought to. At times it is very pleasant, at others the devil.

"Well, old man, so much for the history. Mr. Craig has not taken a decent holiday for ten years, and his nerves have got bad, so at my instigation, and after a great deal of persuasion, I managed to get him off to New Zealand. He arrives on or about Dec. 12 in the *Ruahine*. He will be a stranger in a strange land, and I put him



WITH HIS MANAGING DIRECTOR, MR. C. T. CRAIG.

entirely in your tender mercies, being assured, if it is possible for you to do anything for him, you will do it as it should be done.

"He is a fine old boy. Physically is fond of golf (at which he is pretty bad I think). He wants to have a look at some scenery before going on to Christchurch, where my family will, I hope, 'do him proud.' If you could manage to meet him, tell him the best hotel, tell him where to go, what to see, etc., it would make a very great difference to his stay in N.Z. He is only able to spend two weeks in N.Z. He has not only been everything that is kind to me, but is my Boss. So any kindness you show him is double kindness to me. I am naturally not writing to anyone else in Wellington, and he is entirely in your hands if you will take him on—sole agency, in fact.

"Am very disappointed at not being able to come out, but took it into my head to work, and there it is. I even wished to

chuck Wimbledon for business, but old Craig, good sportsman that he is, wouldn't allow me to do so.

"Am not married or engaged—God, what long tongues some of them have in New Zealand. If there was anything to tell you, I would naturally do so.

"Yours very sincerely,

"ANTHONY F. WILDING."

À propos of Mr. Craig's prospective visit to New Zealand, Anthony wrote to his employer from Bowdon :

"*Tuesday.*

"MY DEAR GOV.,

"If you don't give yourself more time to catch the R.M.S. *Ruahine* than you gave me to catch the 2.40 train, you and your chic Norfolks will not see New Zealand just yet. However, by running like a hare I just managed to slip on board the train. In case the spirit moves me, which I fear it will have to do, I will catch a train to

Scotland on Friday afternoon, so please, Gov., get the ticket renewed or lend me the original. . . . Worrying is the very devil to one. How happy one would be without it."

Anthony had the use of his company's season ticket between London and Edinburgh, and was thus constantly on the move. He also kept a motor-bicycle at Bowdon. Business visits to London, Sheffield, Edinburgh, and other centres were taken as a matter of routine, but he chafed against the confinement of railway carriages, and the fact that he was putting on weight did not please him. Moreover, the office formalities in Watling Street, which were of course essential, often made him fret. "I have 'flu.' and feel an absolute wreck," he wrote to me in October. "I have been in the City all day and cannot stick it a minute longer. If you will, please stop at Wimbledon this evening—Mr. W. A. Horn, Wimbledon Park House, Wimbledon. It is right at the top of the

hill, and if you can find the way, walk up through the garden. We can have a room to ourselves any time between 5 p.m. and 10 p.m." At the risk of infection I called at Mr. Horn's house, and found Anthony very depressed. He set so high a standard on perfect fitness that a slight ailment made him think something serious was the matter. In these things he was like a child.

Anthony stuck manfully to Manchester, however, refusing many invitations to week-end in London. From Bowdon about this time he wrote :

"I have been to London the last three week-ends. Can't very well come down again as I would probably get the sack if I did, and in any event must go to Dixon's. However, I will be in London on the night of the 25th and will be able to have a part of three or four days with you. . . . I get awfully fed up with this place—it is the devil. There is a room here if you ever come nigh."

Towards the end of the year his company sent him on his first visit to Sweden—a very pleasing prospect. He wrote from Bowdon:

"My firm are sending me to Scandinavia, and I leave next week. I expect I will get a little play with H.M.[1] . . . I find it difficult to settle down to anything at night after 'going' all day. Will be away only about two weeks. . . ."

From Goteborg he sent a postcard to his mother:

"GOTEBORG,
"*November* 11, 1911.

"Arrived here yesterday, a forty-eight hour journey overland from London. Get along all right with the Swedes so far, and hope to get some good business through later. Had a great game of tennis in excellent covered court to-day. Somewhat to my surprise, I defeated the local champion 6—1, 6—1, 7—5. Got a bit puffed near

[1] King Gustav, a great devotee of lawn tennis.

the end. It was my first single or decent tennis for 5½ months. Pulp keeps me fairly busy. There are so many details, prices, freights, etc., one must have on the end of fingers. We have agents here, or rather principals, and they look after me well. Hotel here is excellent. I go to Christiania to-morrow and then Skien and Drammen, and then Stockholm."

"DRAMMEN,
"*November* 21, 1911.

"Trains here go much slower than a motor-bike. Hope for a little exercise in Stockholm. Here nothing but trains and pulp."

"*November* 22.

"Have seen ever so many Pulp magnates, and have got along very well with them. Snowing here very hard."

From Stockholm he wrote to me:

"GRAND HOTEL, STOCKHOLM,
"*November* 22, 1911.

"I had a couple of games of tennis in

Goteborg, and am going to play here. I lunched to-day with Boström and Setterwall,[1] and exceedingly nice chaps I found them. I hear H.M. Gustav heard I was coming and has kept asking when I am going to arrive. He is in the country for a day or two. . . . Have been all about in Norway, Skien, Drammen, Christiania, etc. Trust am doing some good."

Anthony made several other business trips to Scandinavia, sometimes by himself, sometimes in the company of Mr. Craig. They often sleighed, and not infrequently motored through places where motors were absolutely unknown. The managing director and his subordinate were on very friendly terms during these jaunts, thanks in no small measure to Mr. Craig's ability to keep pace with the younger man's strenuous habits. It was Anthony who always settled where and when to dine. If Anthony was hungry, Mr. Craig had to be hungry;

[1] Well-known Swedish amateurs.

if Anthony wanted to go to bed, leaving Mr. Craig to amuse himself, he went. Nobody could govern or overrule him in matters concerning the upkeep of his body. Swedish customers were always delighted to see him; he undoubtedly created a good atmosphere for business deals. But he was inclined to overestimate the value of these preliminaries. He thought big deals were bound to come when their possibility was only being discussed; he counted a good many chickens before they were hatched. The following letters written to his firm from Scandinavia are typical of many others. Incidentally, they show the light-hearted manner in which he tackled commercial problems.

"GRAND HOTEL, STOCKHOLM,
"*July* 26, 1912.

"To Messrs. H. C. & Co.,

"DEAR SIR,

"Saw the old sportsman with the beard, he seemed a very decent old boy.

As you know, he is outsold for this year and 1913, but for 1914 he will accept £7 15*s.* f.o.b., and with a firm offer £7 12*s.* 6*d.* he said. He goes to England in Sept. —— are his agents and he can only sell to us f.o.b., but this agency agreement terminates almost at once and then I see no reason why H. & C. should not take up the running. I have an appointment with W—— later, and lunch with Prince Wilhelm, and leave this evening.

"Yours,

"A. F. WILDING."

"GRAND HOTEL, STOCKHOLM,
"*July* 28, 1912.

"Have gone too quick, and feel like a piece of chewed string. Weather has been awfully close. Left Stockholm 9.35 p.m., arrived Otobollo 6.30 a.m. following morning. Motor met me and I was given a splendid breakfast. Old B. came and got me for another breakfast at 10 o'clock. He has a very nice wife and children and

English governess. After breakfast we had several hours' business and went down to his office. To repeat all he said would fill pages . . . but this now, if ever, is the time to buy mechanical. I naturally used the time-honoured arguments against —— how often this sort of thing had happened before, and would assuredly happen again, a little rain and so on. But these ideas are safely in his head, and he absolutely believes them; it is not bluff in any shape or form. Of course he is probably wrong, I only give his opinions. Mr. C——'s views rather tallied, so I would not be surprised if they were near the mark. Another point is this—there has been no rain, and unless some change takes place, last year will assuredly repeat itself. Speculation is a bad thing, but I would be inclined to have a little go now if . . . but God only knows. At any rate one thing seems clear; some 5*s*. a ton now separate buyers and sellers. . . . Am going up to G—— to-night unless I go to bed instead, as I

feel rotten. Five nights out of seven travelling in this weather kills. I spent the whole day with the B——'s. They had twenty-one guests to dinner and I got away to Stockholm by the 10.10 train. B—— is an excellent chap in every way, and all his family are very nice. We motor-boated down the lake and altogether the day was delightful except that I felt dead to the world.

"B—— showed me some tables of sales made in Norway and Sweden. We ought to get them regularly. . . . From what I gather these chemical chaps are higher up than ever. Interesting news is that:—— and —— signed a contract at Monte Carlo for 75,000 tons up to 17 and —— retained a right to book a further 75,000 tons at 2*s.* a ton higher from 1916 to 1922. B—— is kicking himself about it already."

"Grand Hotel, Stockholm,
(*Undated*)

"However, R——, his henchman and I

talked it over at luncheon and they strongly recommended my going there as it would undoubtedly greatly aid future business. Therefore he is to be telephoned again and if he approves I will spend Sunday with him—I only trust he is not a churchman.

"I think Prince Wilhelm is still sailing, but I have written him a line. Am dining with Boström. Mr. B—— gave me a most delightful day in Särö. I swam and pipped Mr. Leffler at 'patters' before an assembled multitude of a few adults, many dogs and children."

"Ström,
"*August* 11, 1912.

"I spent out the week-end with Mr. H—— and family. His brother arrived on Sunday. Mr. H——, as you have found, is an exceedingly difficult man. At the moment he says he 'sleeps well,' which means there is no hurry to sell. However about the 15th August he promises to give over his august mind to selling the pulp for 1913

(11,000 tons). The more difficult a man is, the more tact there is necessary in dealing with him. I can handle old H—— all right, but it needs a lot of trouble. At the moment he is intent on watching the English buyers rise.

"I caught a very early boat and travelled the latter part of the journey with that ugly old sinner ——. To my surprise he came up to me and remained all the way, talking about the Riviera, India and Ceylon, where he intends spending this winter. I had a hell of a crossing in the R.M.S. *Nyland*. I phoned Mr. S—— and told him that I was motoring out. I hired a bike, stopped at Svartvik, found B—— away, but had a talk to his secretary. Was met here by the family. Mr. L—— as usual very charming. *He will not sell* for 1916, so that is finished, but the increase of quantity I have every hope of managing, although at the moment he says he wants £8 15*s*. He is further very perturbed that he has had no letter or telegram relating to D——. When in

Heaven's name are you going to learn to write and answer letters? It is so easy to dictate a polite nothing or mention in one of your telegrams D——'s attitude. . . ."

"CHRISTIANA,
"*January* 14, 1913.

"Spent nine hours here yesterday, getting back to Kingsberg at 2 a.m., and catching a 7 a.m. train to Drammen—a real pleasure excursion. After an appalling amount of food and liquor we patched up a contract form for—— . . .

"The Consul S—— appears to find married life at seventy-five congenial."

"HUDIKSVALL,
"*August* 1, 1913.

". . . Had the usual big feed and immediately after played E. L. a single at L. tennis which England won by 6 games to 1. It was noticed that the Englishman was in the better training. I then engaged myself (on the tennis court) with one of the young ladies, but at the critical stage

of a very exciting match my train (the last) hove in sight and E. L. and I had to bolt down the hill. Mr. L. is a tremendous admirer of Mr. Craig's beauty and personality. The moment he lives for now, he says, is a return visit of Mr. C., my secondary self in company. There was no boat for two days and a train leaving at 6.20 p.m. arrived Hudiksvall 8.20 next morning. This I gave a miss in baulk to. I spent a part of the evening with one of our tennis friends. My train left at 2 p.m. the following day, and I met E. again before leaving—in fact he came and saw me safely away. On arrival here I phoned Ström, but no reply. However, got Mr. L. first thing this morning and he is sending the auto. Mr. L. very weak with his English, and I strongly advise a course at a Berlitz school. However, aided by a third party, we got along fairly well. He has invited me to return to dine with him and go over his old mill.

" *Re Pulp.*—He is exactly as the others

—a child of the moment—' water, water everywhere, but not an ounce of pulp.' . . . He talked glibly about —— and I told him he was off his chump—only ever so politely, and he agreed it was impossible now. However, all we are concerned with is this. He has and is willing to sell 5,000 tons 1913 to 1916. He asked us to write. He will, no doubt, be difficult to work, but he must sell sooner or later and B. will have to write excellent letters in Swedish. . . . Please remember these things, as you know these details make all the difference with these chaps. It is an extraordinary thing, but the fact remains that we literally have to coax them to sell. There has been a little rain, but if it rained really hard prices for 1916 would go down, I think—funny but true. . . . G—— or something introduced himself and is at the moment phoning S—— to know if he may come out. I don't like him. He travels in some varnish. Damn him. Will probably leave Stockholm about August 6."

" HERNÖSAND,

" . . . He complained of a tummy-ache yesterday. They said I would be very welcome, etc., if I cared to come, and that the launch would fetch me back from Skonvik, which it did, and I didn't waste time at Svartvik. . . .

" *Important.*—Will Mr B—— write to his reverenced father and obtain originals or copies of those private and confidential damned statistics which I have had so consistently rammed down my throat. A——, who is ' agin ' all these Unions and statistics and things, swears that all the figures are absolutely correct. In any event they are useful to have, and we should certainly have them. If they are correct these statistics are fairly convincing.

" *S—— H——.*—Announced myself as his future agent for Scotland. He was very well, dirty and unshaven as usual, but full of humour. Was very bucked with me and himself because he had seen a photo

of me in the *Graphic*, taken in by some semi-low café."

During his two years of "wood-pulp," thanks to Mr. Craig's sporting generosity, Anthony did not altogether neglect his lawn tennis. As we have seen, he successfully defended the championship at Wimbledon in 1912 and 1913, while he was given time off to compete both on the Riviera in the spring and at Continental resorts like Deauville in the autumn. Further, although not in systematic practice throughout the year, he managed to enjoy many knock-up games among his friends at private houses, notably at Sussex Lodge, Grosvenor House, Blenheim, and Hartsbourne Manor, Bushey, which in later years he made his *pied-à-terre*.

Early in 1912 there came a line from him :

"SPRING GROVE, NR. SHEFFIELD.

"I leave for the Riviera on February 9

or 10. Am not very fit and hardly see how I will manage to do so, but I will have a damned good try. Am giving myself a full week on Riviera first and a good deal ought to be done in that time. Business fairly slack at present. There is a large dance here on Friday night and I promised to go months ago (so I hear). At any rate, go I must. Uncle Joe Dixon is one of the best chaps in the world; he is at present reading the book.[1]"

After the championships in 1912 he decided to give up first-class lawn tennis altogether, as the following note indicates:

"67–69, WATLING STREET, E.C.,
"*July* 21, 1912.

"I am leaving for Sweden to-night. It may interest you to hear that I am by way of retiring from serious tennis. The Governor sent a notice to the *Paper Trades Review* stating that the exigencies of busi-

[1] *On the Court and Off.*

ness would not allow my playing much, etc. Business must come first, and it is quite probable that I will be unable to defend next year. . . . I still hope to get in a few tournaments. . . .

"P.S.—Naturally if time permits and I am fit I will defend, but it is obviously impossible to return from Northern Sweden a few days before the challenge round and hope to do myself justice."

On the way to Sweden he wrote to his mother from Hamburg :

"*July* 23, 1912.

"Here I am at Hamburg *en route* to Goteborg and Stockholm. Had a very nice week-end with the Wolvertons before leaving England. It is very hot, but travelling the best way and knowing the roads alleviate suffering. I hope to stop at Deauville and possibly Baden this year, but don't worry if I lose, as I have no time to practice."

In August, 1912, he wrote to me from Sweden :

" No, I won't chuck tennis entirely, old man, hope to get a fair amount of time, but I am even now beginning to have that ' I-must-do-it-myself ' sort of feeling in the business. My people like the book very much, but object to ' hurt like hell.' Have been very busy here, and up to date I am missing a fine big contract by 2*s.* 6*d.* per ton—damn it. —— had me quite right. Am fairly fed up with pulp—not fed up, but I must dream it. Possibly I may get over to Deauville for some mixed bathing and mild tennis. However, it is doubtful. . . . If business is slack I would go to Baden Baden. I feel I deserve to spread myself."

To Mr. Craig he wrote :

" Normandy Hotel, Deauville,
" *August* 1912.

" The very moment the games are over I

will make a B line to H—— and his rotten old Tinfos. My absence gives you a chance of understanding that all our previous business with 'Joe' has demanded considerable work and tact on my part. I am very anxious to get back to get some business through. Gov., dear, your one swallow in a summer does not hit the nail on the head. I have opened up business with T—— and the fact that we have not placed his entire contract was that we had not the stuff. Also S., M., F., W., N., old man G., and many others I am in touch with and have done business with. I feel fairly fit, but have been leading a very happy life."

To Mr. Craig again—and this letter indicates how much he hated "showing off" before the public gaze :

"BLENHEIM PALACE,
"*July* 13, 1913.

"MY DEAR GOV,—

". . . *Re* Sweden, you have me in a mess if we leave on Sat: I have pro-

mised to spend the week-end with F. E. Smith [1] and further take Maxine [2] there. If I have to buzz off to Sweden before Monday they will both be very sick. Secondly, I think it would be great fun and a success to motor in Sweden, but as a motorist I can tell you it would take a great deal out of my motor. When I used to talk it over I always said a 'Ford' was the thing, not one's own motor. However, I have written to my brother—did so a few days ago—and if he doesn't object I would love the trip, but as a matter of fact, and between us two, he would be an absolute fool if he didn't. There appears to be a tennis tournament at Särö, July 27th to August 5th, and that is what B—— apparently wants me for, as Gussie [3] goes for it.

"A huge party here. I refused all the ladies to-day when they asked me one after

[1] The present Attorney-General.
[2] Miss Maxine Elliott.
[3] King Gustav.

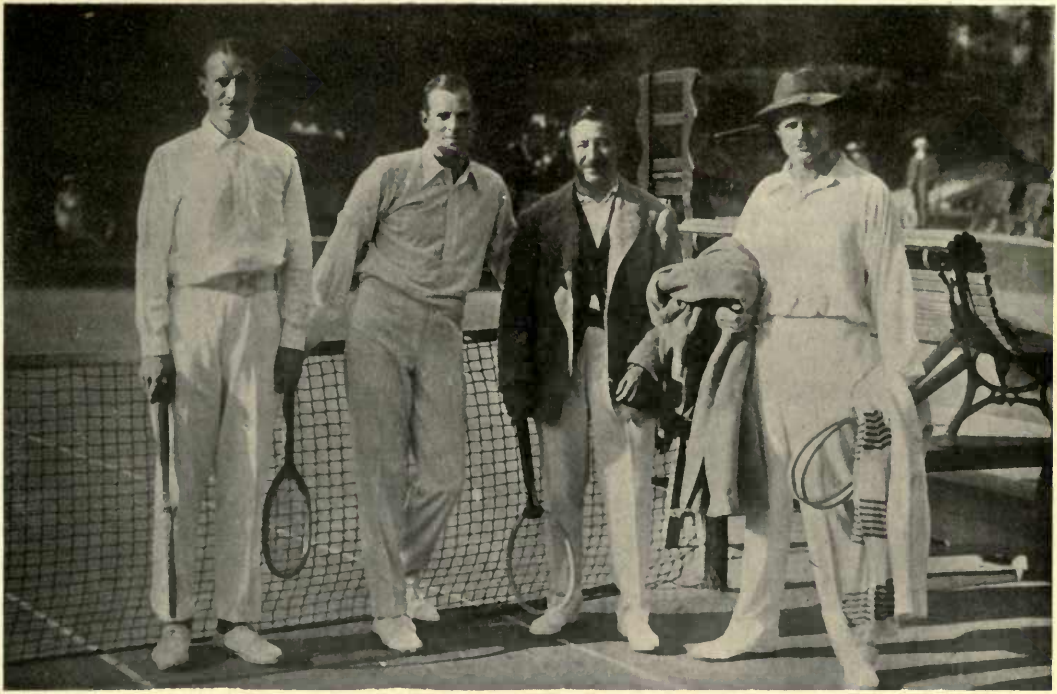
another to play a show exhibition match. I was angry and will see them all damned before going and strutting about showing off to provide amusement for their majesties. Please let me know as soon as you possibly can *re* Sweden, as I will have to write F. E. Smith and quarrel with Maxine. If we don't take a motor, am all for the train."

On this last trip to Sweden with Mr. Craig, the wood-pulp business and its complex negotiations were beginning to oppress him. He welcomed any diversions. Thus he wrote to his warm-hearted friend, Mr. Joseph Dixon :

"LUNDSVAL, SWEDEN,
"*August* 8, 1913.

"MY DEAR UNCLE JOE,—

". . . We bought a second-hand Ford motor in Manchester the day after seeing you, and shipped it to Goteborg. Craig and I went to Christiania, etc., and joined the motor there. We went to Särö



F. G. Lowe. *A. F. W.* *G. M. Simond.* *Craig Biddle.*

ON THE BEAU SITE COURTS, CANNES, 1914.

for six days, and I had good tennis with Gustav, who is a good chap. I used to go and bathe with him, and then sometimes he would take me on his yacht. . . . We have motored right up through Sweden here, over 1,000 kilometres, going to mills *en route*. It has been perfectly charming, scenery wonderful, and roads not so very bad except for small stretches. The Ford I took to Särö—only two there, the King's and my Ford. I took the risk—motors are not allowed there. Here I and the royal chauffeur spent hours and hours tuning the Ford up; result is, she has come non-stop and gone up hills like the devil, in fact, a brilliant success. I will sell her in Sweden, as I have a new 'Alda' chassis waiting in Paris.

"We have spent much time with all these pulp sportsmen *en route*, and no doubt it will do much to further our connections with them. Mr. Craig and I don't agree over a single thing from matters motor to wood-pulp. He has had a tummy-

ache which of course has not contributed much to my enjoyment of an otherwise perfect trip. As to business, whatever I want to do is generally wrong, so I refrain a good deal from doing, which is, of course, most unsatisfactory to us both. . . . Frank [1] has gone to New Zealand. Am coming home via Paris to get my new chassis. Will look you up on my return soon."

If there was any business which Anthony could develop with enthusiasm it was the business of motors, and after he and Mr. Craig parted company, it was in this direction that his thoughts turned. He wrote the following note to Mr. Dixon after his return from Deauville:

"St. Petersburg Hotel, London.
"*September*, 1913.

"My dear Uncle Joe,—

"The inevitable has happened.

[1] His brother.

Craig and I have split. My fault, but it was absolutely impossible for me to go on with him. I don't want to worry you, but am coming up to Sheffield for a talk with you about it. I certainly don't want to slack. If you will allow me (and Meme agrees), may I arrive about five o'clock on Monday and stay the night? . . . Miss Maxine Elliott is acting in *Joseph*. I arrived just in time to see some of the first night, and am going to see it all through in a few minutes again.

"Had excellent tennis in Deauville, and after seven weeks of inactivity in Sweden I could not resist a week with charming ladies by the sea.

"I have got my new motor from Charron after lots of trouble. It is thought no end of in Paris now, and is possibly the smartest thing in France at the moment. It does about fifty-eight miles per hour, and is now having a little body put on. I very much hope you won't mind talking my silly affairs over with me."

Through the instrumentality of Mr. Reader Harris, a fellow-member of Queen's Club, who was a director, Anthony joined the Victor Tyre Company, and both on the Continent and in England did excellent business for them.

X

SOME SIDELIGHTS

THE personal charm of Anthony Wilding, the manner in which he ingratiated himself with all classes, has been mentioned. Of intimate friends outside his own family I should not say he had many, for he was too practical to be sentimental, too honest to be suave. Moreover, he did not trade in that current coin of conversation called "small-talk." He was not an indoor man. For that reason he was not a clubable man. He had no parlour tricks. He did not play billiards or bridge. People took Anthony at his face value, and that was good value.

Among his friends of later life was Mr. Balfour, a man he much admired. Between

the veteran statesman, steeped in metaphysics and the philosophy of religion, and the young athlete, who had no taste for *'isms*, there was more than a casual tie. It was almost a case of extremes meeting, though each had a common pastime and a mutual tolerance towards mankind. They met first at a country house—I think Lord Desborough's—where both were guests, and where both, sometimes as partners, engaged in lawn tennis. "I played five sets with Mr. A. J. Balfour last week-end —very mild tennis," Anthony wrote home. "He is one of the most charming men in the world, and in his own set is almost worshipped. In spite of the fact that last Sunday was the critical time of the Lords and Parliament Bill, he did not seem to have a care in the world, except the negotiation of American services, which puzzled him more than the tactics of the House of Commons." But Mr. Balfour's thoughtful pauses on the court bore fruit. "We had not been playing long," added

Anthony, " before he knew as much about what the service was going to do as I did."

Anthony witnessed Mr. Balfour's aeroplane trip, and declared afterwards that it was one of the most sporting events of the Coronation year. The ex-Prime Minister and the young New Zealander were often together. Apart from visits to the same country houses, they met annually on the Riviera for several seasons, and as his interest in his young friend ripened, Mr. Balfour was wont to go to Wimbledon and to Queen's in order that he might follow his triumphs on the court. Probably one of the proudest days in Mr. Balfour's life was when, appearing in his first public tournament in partnership with the champion, he won a prize in the handicap doubles at Nice. Anthony had the privilege of motoring his partner over daily from the villa at which both were staying. On one of these trips, just before a critical match, a young Niçois threw a stone at the passing car, hitting Mr. Balfour on the face. The

statesman made light of the injury, and would not dream of his match being postponed.

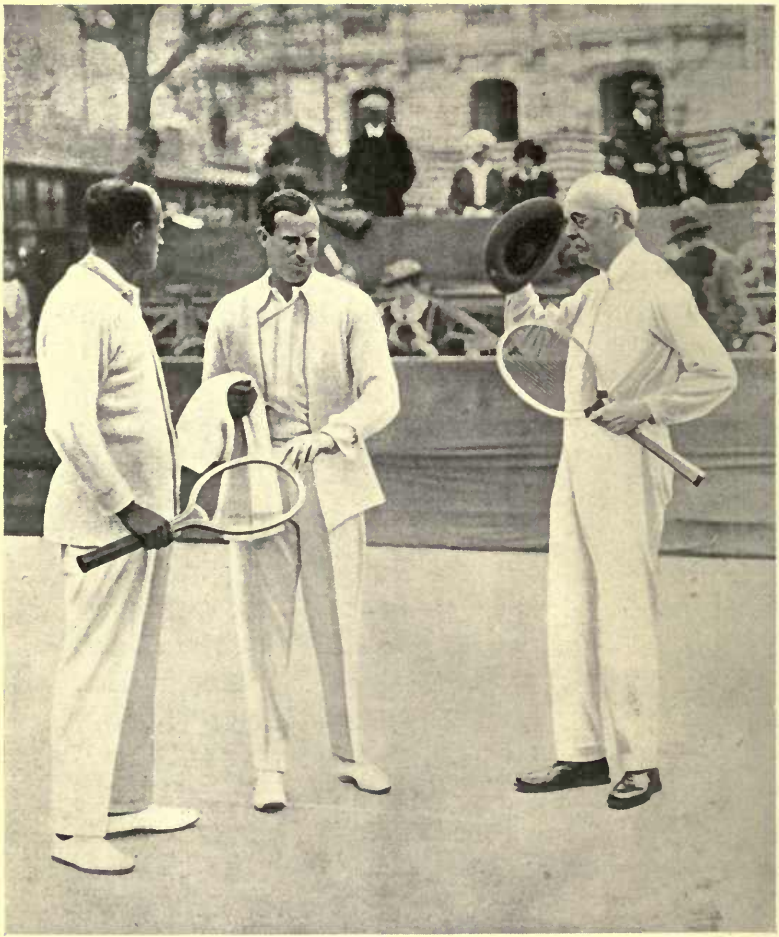
Here is a characteristic note which Anthony wrote about this time to Mr. Joseph Dixon:

"MARYLAND, ST. JEAN CAP FERRAT, A.M.

"MY DEAR UNCLE JOE,—

"Thank you very much for your letter. It all interested me very much indeed. I daresay later on you will come abroad for a bit, and we will go for a little trip. Victors[1] going fairly. All these tennis tournaments require concentration, and if you are really serious at them, a limited mind like mine has all it can swallow and digest. A. J. Balfour is the only other male inmate of this house. He is a dear man, and I have the profoundest admiration for him, just as I have for you. . . . The Duke of Westminster was at

[1] Victor tyres.



Photo] [Navello.

NICE, 1914: ABOUT TO PARTNER MR. BALFOUR.

Cannes for three weeks, and played tennis all day long; likes it better than polo at the moment. He is like an irresponsible schoolboy, but such a good chap. . . ."

Under the sympathetic eye of the champion, Mr. Balfour, like so many others, greatly improved his lawn tennis. On one occasion, after a friendly game, Anthony declared that the present First Lord could beat any Cabinet Minister. Then he corrected himself, and said, "No; there is one Cabinet Minister who could give you points and a beating." Those were the pre-Coalition days—that is to say, before Sir F. E. Smith had joined the Cabinet—and Mr. Balfour, though very modest about his own tennis, was inclined to demur. "Will you issue a challenge to any Cabinet Minister I care to produce?" asked Anthony, in his disarming way. Mr. Balfour agreed. "Then, if you please, put it on paper now," suggested his young friend. In vain they looked round for a

"scrap of paper"; but Mr. Balfour's soft hat was lying near. "You can write the challenge in the lining," said Anthony, as he tossed it over. Mr. Balfour smilingly complied, and in the lining of that hat, if it still exists, the challenge will be found. The Cabinet Minister whom Anthony secretly backed to beat Mr. Balfour was Mr. F. M. B. Fisher, formerly doubles champion of New Zealand, whom I have already mentioned.

One may instance Captain Basil Foster, the rackets ex-champion, as a player who greatly benefited by Anthony's mature coaching. "He would take me out on the hard court at Hartsbourne Manor," recalls Captain Foster, "and together, for half an hour, he and I would knock balls against the wire-netting, first on the forehand, then on the backhand. I not only got the benefit of seeing how he did it, but also, by adjusting my racket properly, or turning my wrist over, he would correct some fundamental fault." In games, as

in most other things, Anthony had a happy knack of reaching the point quickly.

He was ever a welcome guest at private houses in England. At Blenheim, at Eaton Hall, at Taplow, at Sussex Lodge, at Charlton (Sir F. E. Smith's country home), at Hartsbourne Manor, and at many another place where parties gathered, his buoyant personality was cherished. At these friendly gatherings Anthony never had any false pride about his own lawn tennis. "He would always be quite ready to play with any 'rabbit,'" recollects Sir F. E. Smith, "and would do his utmost to win. The only occasion I remember him refusing to play was at Blenheim, when, a number of cracks being present, it was suggested by some one or other (not his host), that the big men should have a tournament on their own account, and that Wilding should play the winner. But this did not appeal to the world's champion. He was not there to give exhibition games, and the project fell through." Anthony mentions

this incident himself in a letter already quoted.

Here is a little tribute from Mr. Gerald du Maurier :

"Anthony Wilding was one of the most attractive men it has been my good fortune to meet. He was so healthy, so clean-minded ; it braced one to talk with him ; and he was so quaintly unconventional. My wife and I were motoring down to Bushey one night after the theatre in a taxi, which broke down in a lonely part. A private motor pulled up ; among its occupants, as we soon discovered, were Miss Maxine Elliott (our week-end hostess), Miss Muriel Wilson, and Anthony Wilding. Off the car in a twinkling, Wilding immediately grasped the situation. He bundled my wife into Miss Elliott's car, and the ladies went off. Then he remained behind, and after a grimy overhauling of the taxi's works, detected the fault and repaired the damage. We reached Bushey long after

midnight. Instead of having his supper with me, he insisted upon spending another hour with the taxi-driver, to see that all was made secure for the latter's homeward journey. Wilding was always modest about his own play. He thought Brookes the greatest player living, and he was never confident about beating McLoughlin. There is little doubt in my own mind that in the last year or two his standard suffered, especially in his service, because he would play, and enjoyed playing, so much 'bumble puppy.'"

And he was ever ready to give advice to comparatively unknown players. Here is a note that he wrote in answer to a request for some antidote to "nerves":

"GRAND HOTEL, STOCKHOLM,
"*May* 10, 1912.

"I know exactly what you mean. The only two things to do are: (1) To play in so many matches that your feelings become

blunted, and you get so accustomed to match play that nerves are forgotten. Caridia on a covered court in practice is as good as anyone in the world, but in a match he can be rotten. (2) The only other thing is to be very fit. The fitter you are the less nervy you are. Nerves ought to be able to be got under control. Actors, and people who perform night after night, soon forget to be nervy.

"I will, I hope, see you at Wimbledon. I have very little time now for practice, or any other kind of games. Most of my time now is given to business."

Nor did he forget his young brother. "How is the tennis?" he wrote from Hamburg in 1912. "You ought to be able to get hold of someone to beat. I am sure some of the players, like Dick Harman, would give you a knock if you arranged to suit their convenience. Do you ever ride the little motor-bike now? Mine is going well."

I have said that Anthony made many friends in many countries. Here is a tribute that comes to hand from Mr. Craig Biddle, of Philadelphia, with whom he spent many a pleasant hour on the Continent, and whose motor-car he used in the war :

" I knew him well—and loved him. He was a big character, a strong one ; never, as I remember, small in any way ; said what he thought usually ; never sulked, or got peevish over small things (as so many of us do at times), and he had the soundest, well-balanced mind I have been in contact with. His reasons for what he did were always pretty rational, when one thought them over. His straightforwardness, and, I might say, boldness, got him usually what he wanted. We were in rooms connecting with each other in my little house at Cannes for four months or more—and under such conditions one's character shows up. About all Tony and I used to quarrel over were

those terrible lobs you and Gordon Lowe used to pop up at *me*! The way to play and meet that form of attack was a serious and continual argument."

Mr. Craig Biddle has had executed a beautiful bronze statuette, about two feet high, of Anthony. It is the work of the eminent sculptor, Paul Troubetzkoy, who knew Anthony, and had drawn a pencil sketch of him at Long Island in August, 1914. A reproduction of this statuette appears as the frontispiece of this volume.

From my friend, Mr. George Simond, who saw much of Anthony abroad, I have received the following notes, revealing in a little stronger light some of his characteristics already touched upon:

"I cannot truthfully say that he was not self-centred, because he certainly was in many ways, but his pleasant manner in a great degree lessened the offence. He disliked talking tennis 'shop,' and always

New Year's Day, Beau Site, Cannes, 1914.

Miss Maxine Elliott. Lady Drogheda. *A. F. W.*

In an Aerodrome: "Somewhere in France," 1915.

moved away from any group of friends bent on discussing the game. On these occasions he would slip his arm into mine, and say, 'Come along, Checkie, I have something to say to you,' and I well knew what that meant. He was devoted to music, and loved to feed where he could listen to a band, even if it were bad. At the Brussels Exhibition I caught him lunching one day, quite alone, at a small restaurant right away from the tennis courts. He was there because there was some music—a piano and violin—and he was humming the airs to himself as he ate his food. It was strange that, with all his love for music, he played no instrument himself.[1]

"The last time I saw him was after his match with Brookes at Wimbledon, when he was being massaged in the dressing-room

[1] Anthony scarcely knew one note from another, having forgotten all that he had learnt in his schooldays. His love for music represented a sympathy for all light-hearted movement. Thus, though he very rarely danced himself, and then very badly, he liked to watch dancing.

by the attendant. I was awfully upset at the poor game he put up that day, and I said to him, ' What were you after, Tony ? You were not playing your game one bit ; you were returning every ball to Brookes' forehand, and without any sting whatever.' He replied, ' Yes, Checkie, I know I was not playing my best, but there was a sort of haze hanging over the court, and I could not see a ball.' He put it down to the great heat, and the vapour rising round the court. At the moment he seemed very depressed.

" He was very simple in his habits, and never gave the least trouble when he stayed with any one—and we were often guests in the same house. The best example of this I know, was when he was staying with Mr. de Bourbel, at Mentone. Their manservant was indisposed one morning, and Wilding was nowhere to be found—his breakfast was being kept hot for him in the dining-room. Rather than give the maid extra work, it appeared that he went down to the kitchen and had it there !

"As soon as a tournament was over he used to dash off the next morning on his motor-bicycle, leaving me to pack his things, and bring on his luggage. I well remember how on one occasion, at the Grand Hotel at Lyons, the maid knocked at my door, saying that my friend had departed and left all his things lying all over the room. I went with her to investigate, and there was everything in the greatest disorder —dress-clothes, shirts, flannels, jewellery, rackets, etc., and quite a lot of photographs of his late hostesses. It seems that these last had upset the maid; she nearly went into tears, saying, 'That m'sieu could have no heart, leaving all these lovely ladies lying about like that!' I told her not to worry over small matters, but just to pack everything up as nicely as she could, and she should have five francs for her trouble.

"Four times we went to the Wiesbaden tournament together, and won the doubles each time. I have also played many friendly

games with him at odd moments—on the Riviera and elsewhere. Naturally his side always won in such matches as he and Miss Maxine Elliott against Mrs. Winston Churchill and myself, he and Mrs. Hall Walker against Mrs. Gordon Lowe and myself, and he and Lady Drogheda against Lord Drogheda and myself. But I can recall one match where I had the better of him, which greatly pleased my partner as well as myself. That was when Wilding and J. Galbraith Horn [1] played against the Maharajah Holkar of Indore and me on the Winter Palace court at Nice, in 1913, when we won by two sets to one.

"Wilding had an unconventional appetite. Dining one evening in Paris at Garnier's with Wilding and one or two others, I was given the bill to check and pay. Seeing butter down for five francs, I called the waiter and asked him for an

[1] An English civilian who, though well over military age, was imprisoned by the Germans for several months, suffering severe hardship.

explanation. Pointing to Wilding, he said it was all right, as that gentleman had eaten twenty-five pats!

"I should like to mention the great affection the late Prince Batthyany-Strattmann entertained for Wilding. It was the admiration of the true old English gentleman for a fine specimen of young English manhood. There was no greater follower of lawn tennis on the Continent than this nobleman of Hungarian birth, and he was greatly loved by all whose who had the privilege of meeting him."

That Anthony had a keen sense of humour is shown by the following "document" which he sent to Mr. C. A. Voigt, the referee at Baden-Baden, explaining his absence from that tournament. One of the early German Zeppelins, demonstrating its mighty efficiency, had gone up in smoke:

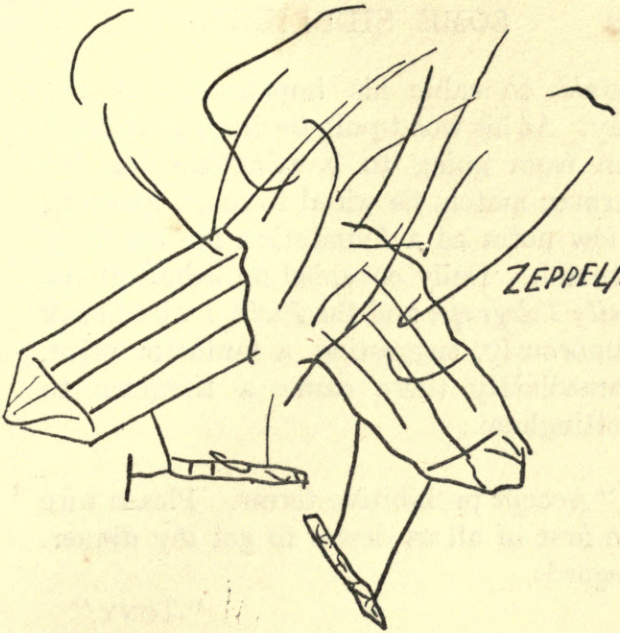
"We, the undersigned, do hereby de-

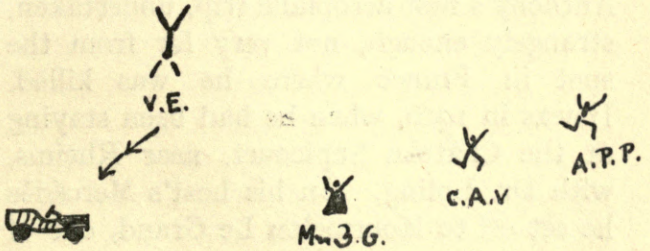
clare that the dreadful catastrophe depicted on the opposite page was the only reason that prevented us from attending the special show propounded under your able management.

"MAX DECUGIS,
"ANTHONY F. WILDING.
"PAUL DE BORMAN."

An extra spice was given to the above by the fact that each player signed his name with a different-coloured pencil, it being one of Mr. Voigt's foibles to correspond in blue and red pencils. The sketch, drawn by Anthony, is reproduced. The figures represented as rushing to the motor-car from the Zeppelin menace are those of friends waiting at Baden-Baden for the arrival of the three errant players.

Another illustration of Anthony's humour concerns his casual efforts as a journalist. During the Davis Cup matches of 1913, when the Americans were in England, he was commissioned by the *New York*


ZEPPELIN VI.


V.E.
C.A.V
A.P.P.
M.3.G.

Herald to cable his impressions of the play. As his wood-pulp business prevented him from going to Nottingham for the German match, he wired to me, requesting a few notes as a foundation for his daily dispatch. Fully occupied on behalf of the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Field*, I wired back humorously, suggesting a fantastic price. Immediately there came a telegram to Nottingham:

"Accept prohibitive terms. Please wire me first of all as desire to get my dinner. Regards,

"TONY."

Some mention may be made here of Anthony's first aeroplane trip, undertaken, strangely enough, not very far from the spot in France where he was killed. It was in 1910, when he had been staying at the Château Sapicourt, near Rheims, with Dr. Luling. In his host's Mercédès he set off to Mourmelon Le Grand, one of

HUNGARY, 1907: "WE SHOT ALTOGETHER ABOUT 4,000 HEAD OF GAME."

(Photo lent by Mr. C. A. Voigt.)

HIS FIRST AEROPLANE TRIP: AT MOURMELON, NEAR RHEIMS.

the best French schools of aviation. He was fortunate enough to meet one of the proprietors of the Antoinette factory of aeroplanes, who informed him that if he came over early next morning, he might fly to his heart's content. Needless to say, he jumped at the prospect. Here is his own description [1] of what transpired:

"I was soon up in a machine, seated with the head pilot-instructor, a very jovial man. His only words of English were 'Goad-bye,' and these he always hurled at me with an accompanying dig in the back when he took a corner at an angle calculated to cause alarm, or made a 'Vol Plane.' All went well for a bit, and we flew round the course several times, when my friend said 'Goad-bye,' and shot off over a plantation of trees, sending the machine up higher and higher. Suddenly the wretched engine began to miss fire. I knew a missfire well by sight and sound,

[1] *On the Court and Off.*

but at this moment it was more significant to me than ever before. My friend behind said ' Goad-bye,' and off we went at a great pace towards earth. But just as we looked like making a hole in it, the elevating planes seemed to be raised a bit, and we glided up, and then went along beautifully on fairly smooth ground. The sensation was very fine, and I hope to have many more ' Vol Planes ' ; but when the engine stopped dead of its own accord, I really thought my last moment had come.

" Our somewhat sudden departure from space to earth was seen at headquarters, and very soon two cars full of interested men and blue-overalled mechanics arrived on the scene to see what was the matter. These clever mechanicians soon traced the trouble to a stop in the petrol pipe ; this remedied, off we went again. We hadn't got up very far when once more the old engine stopped dead, and flop we came again, this time with a little bump, although M. Pilot said it was very gentle. After

putting in a fresh accumulator we started off again, but alighted, intentionally this time, at the depot, to fill up with water and petrol. Off we went once more, and attained a great height, and were aloft some time."

Here ended his first flight. He described the sensation as "very fine. When high up the wind seems to shake the frail craft, and its general behaviour is very similar to a light boat on water slightly ruffled by wind." Several German aviators, it may be noted, were experimenting at that school. There were also many Russian pupils.

When staying in Hungary, Anthony was much impressed by the methods employed at some of the great shoots which he attended. The day usually started with a meal which might be described as a blend of ordinary English breakfast with a sumptuous afternoon tea. Servants rushed about with fresh pancakes, muffins, and tea-

cakes. When everybody was satisfied, the guests clambered up into the various carriages waiting outside. Walking was exceedingly unpopular. Four horses drew each carriage over the heavy track. The party was met by loaders and seat-bearers. If any member was a very good shot, or blessed with extraordinary luck, a Hungarian lady would get out and sit with him, offering advice. Anthony once allowed an old fox to run away untouched, and he never forgot the scolding he received—for a fox is the thing to shoot. The Hungarian women who shoot are invariably good. He mentions that one of the archduchesses, exceptionally keen, "appeared in delightfully sensible kit, which included Tyrolean stockings, a skirt somewhat resembling a kilt, and a much-be-feathered hat. In spite of having a crack shot on either side, she could hold her own with them all."

A thousand brace of partridges in one day to eight guns was not an unusual bag.

After each beat the carriages picked up the guns. The host then asked each gun how many he had shot. Lunch was taken hurriedly out of doors. They returned for afternoon tea, and then the men of the party retired to their rooms and shed their muddy boots and thick stockings, to appear in slippers and silk stockings—the latter having been worn under the thick ones. At night a famous Tzigane band came down from Buda Pesth, and melody and a little dancing would keep the company up almost until dawn. Anthony adds that on a big shoot some six hundred beaters, clad in their picturesque attire, toed the line. The character of some of these was doubtful. They were not above murdering the head gamekeeper if they got the chance.

As a pendant to this miscellaneous chapter I give a note, written to Mr. Harraway, President of the Otago Lawn Tennis Association, New Zealand, by Mr. H. J. Lamb, President of the South African Association. Coming direct from a month's

sea-voyage, Anthony had won the South African championship in 1910 at Johannesburg :

" Wilding has made himself immensely popular here, and we are not a bit sorry that he has annexed our championship. On the contrary, we are pleased that so distinguished a player and so thorough a sportsman and gentleman has won, and I desire, through you, to congratulate the New Zealand Lawn Tennis Association. We are very sorry indeed that his stay here has been of such short duration. No more popular sportsman has ever visited us, and a warm welcome awaits him whenever he pays us another visit."

Alas ! that opportunity was never to be given.

XI

AT THE FRONT

WHEN the call for volunteers came at the beginning of the great war, there was never any doubt that Anthony Wilding would respond. War in the abstract he hated; personally he had no quarrel against the Germans—or, for that matter, against any man; his was not a pugnacious nature. But Anthony had the instinctive love of the over-seas man for the motherland. He was an Anzac, that was enough. And even if the cause of freedom had not made its appeal, there was the spirit of open-air adventure to lure him on.

The question before Anthony was not whether he should go into the fight, but how soon his going could be accomplished. A commission in a foot regiment did not

attract him. It would probably have meant several months of preliminary training in England ; he wanted a quicker route to the front. From the first he "smelt petrol," and immediately he returned from America in September he began to "worry round" to see what was going in the motor line. His friend, Mr. Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, was forming his Naval Brigade, which promised to include armoured cars as auxiliary units. Anthony had previously held a lieutenant's commission in the King's Colonials. Mr. Churchill suggested that he should apply for a temporary commission in the Royal Marines. He threw himself into the requisite preliminaries with characteristic zest, and early in October was gazetted second lieutenant.

In actuality he was a Marine only for a few days, for the reason that, after his unit had crossed the Channel and returned to England, opportunity threw in

his path work of a novel and independent character. His intimate knowledge of the Continent and his skill as a motor-driver were employed in the Headquarters Intelligence Corps, to which he was temporarily attached. At that time his chief was Major Baird, and one heard of him driving this officer from point to point, often under shell-fire, along the Allied front. He described his job in a letter home :

"FRANCE,
"*October* 16, 1914.

"I go out about 5.30 a.m. and motor as near to the German lines and outposts as possible and report all information to headquarters. I motor the senior intelligence officer, an awfully nice chap. I cannot tell you any news, as this letter is censored. There are hundreds of motors with machine-guns. Some also with armour, which buccaneer all over the country. We left a little town yesterday just before—ten minutes before—the Germans shelled it. I

have motored already about 500 miles in the war zone and find it the most intensely interesting work I have ever done. I shot hard at an aeroplane on one trip, but without hurting him. However, yesterday a machine-gun did better and cut the high-tension wire on another, bringing down two officers, both decorated with the Iron Cross. My Alda has been a wonder so far, but it is too good to last. The motors all break down—no time to touch them except to shove in oil and petrol, and they all gradually give in."

A week later (October 22) he wrote :

"All well. I live generally at Headquarters with the Staff and motor all along the lines every day. I generally mess with the Naval flying officers. They are wonderfully fine men. One of them flew to Düsseldorf twice, the second time destroying a Zeppelin. My Alda still goes well. This is a motor war. Horses are more or less

useless. Shrapnel fire is bad; it whistles and shrieks. Am afraid the war will be a big business."

But sterner work was soon to come. Commander Samson, R.N., was engaged, among others, in organising the Naval Air Service. Anthony forsook the back of the front and became attached to that department, which was to embrace armoured cars as an auxiliary. He wrote to his mother:

"*October* 31.

"Commander Samson has allowed me to be attached to his lot for the time. We are the Naval Air Wing with armoured motor-cars as a side-show. We all live and mess together and go from place to place as we advance or retire. At the moment the two armies are closely engaged, so there is little scope for armoured motors. However, every day brave boys spend a great part of the day flying in all

weathers and being shot at all the time. Their flights are, of course, far greater than anything in flying history. We often bring down Taubes. The brutes drop bombs on us every day. They usually kill horses or children. A bad business, war. It is gradually getting cold. Too awful to think of the poor devils in the trenches. *We* have a roof over our heads and some degree of comfort."

Commander Samson testifies that he found Anthony " an extremely cheery messmate, always terribly keen to do anything to help." Throughout the depth of winter they billeted together in a house near Dunkirk. Anthony practised two of his boyhood habits. He slept on a balcony covered with glass, with a large French window wide open. He supplied the mess with game, going out to shoot hares in the neighbourhood of Furnes. All the time he was remarkably fit and buoyant.

One day there came a request from the

Belgians to drive some Germans out of a farmhouse. Commander Samson and Anthony went out on the main road between Peroyse and Ramcappel. With them was a three-pounder gun on a Mercédès motor-lorry. They had to get into action from a very exposed position on the road—about thirty yards behind the Belgian front line trench. They were carrying out their job thoroughly, and had wrought considerable damage with thirty rounds, when the Germans turned two field guns on them. Luckily the enemy's shooting was bad, or disaster must have followed. After taking temporary but inadequate cover in a ditch, the officers dashed along the road to Peroyse, the Germans chasing the lorry with shrapnel during the whole journey.

In letters home shortly afterwards Anthony told of many exciting raids from German aeroplanes, and of reprisals on our side. He described the daring raids of Lieutenant Pearse and Lieutenant Davis on Zeebrugge and Düsseldorf, ex-

pressing the most unbounded admiration for these gallant men. "Two army flyers were killed here last week," he mentions in one letter. "The others didn't worry or get nervous, but just waded in as before." He did a little flying himself at this period, once hunting a submarine out to sea; on another occasion he flew over the German lines. But he was not to take up aerial work seriously.

Late in February, Commander Samson's squadron was ordered to the Dardanelles. He took no armoured cars, only aeroplanes. Anthony assisted in the embarkation of this aerial fleet at the British port, and then enjoyed a week's leave in London—"the first," he wrote to his mother, "after five months in France and Flanders." The Duke of Westminster, just going back to the Front, insisted he should stay at Grosvenor House. "I live in solitary state, comfort and happiness," Anthony's letter continued. "I have a good deal to do, but play a little tennis here in the

early morning. I am seeing all my friends, too, and am loving it all."

Back again in France on March 16, he was attached to the new squadron of Rolls-Royce armoured cars, under the command of his friend, the Duke of Westminster. For some days he was billeted at the villa which Lieutenant-Commander Chilcott of the Royal Naval Air Department had made his headquarters. Here there was some marking of time, inevitable, but rather chafing to Anthony. After the Battle of Neuve Chapelle the impracticability of using armoured cars in trench warfare had been demonstrated. There was nothing doing in the armoured-car line for the moment, though two or three went down to Armentières. Anthony and his superiors knocked about Dunkirk, experimenting and making plans.

But on the night of March 31 the Duke and Anthony were out on an armoured lorry, "loosing off about 50 rounds of high explosives at the enemy's parapets."

They partially demolished at 500 yards range several small cottages in which, as Anthony put it, "several Germans and machine-guns were supposed to be sleeping. Our firing occupied about seven minutes and then off we ran for home. Bullets whizzed round us all night long, but didn't hurt us a bit—a big gun, of course, is our undoer, or an accident to the car."

Early in April, reinforced with men and munitions, the squadron extended its operations. On April 12 we hear of Anthony and his junior officer, Lieutenant H. C. Woodward, R.N.V.R., going down to the firing-line, about thirty miles away, with two wagons, each a 25-h.p. Seabrook, weighing about eight tons. They also had a powerful Mercédès—the car belonging to his American friend, Craig Biddle. Anthony was delighted at the prospect of independent action. To his mother he wrote :

"Have got a little command of my own.

I have thirty men, one junior officer, and three 3-pounder guns, one Rolls-Royce armoured car, and three machine-guns. Westminster is not here; he is still my commander, of course. He is such a splendid man, and has got his brigade going really well—they are so pleased with him that his squadron has now been brought up to twenty-four cars."

On arrival the section reported themselves to General Anderson, a Divisional Commander in the Indian Corps. He was attracted to Anthony immediately, and, after a cheery conversation, sent the two officers to an imposing château, at the same time inviting them to the Headquarters Mess that night. Here they were introduced to all the Indian Corps commanders, who received them in the kindliest manner, being much attracted by their keenness. On the way down Anthony had impressed upon his junior the importance of making themselves thor-

oughly agreeable to the "big guns." Not that he was not always ingratiating, but he realised that since he was a man looking for a job, it was desirable to make the best impression. The knack of getting his own way did not desert Anthony even at the front.

Anthony began his reconnaissances at once. Woodward and he left their heavy cars at Lestrem, and went out on the Mercédès. Enemy snipers were about, and the investigations were fraught with considerable danger ; but, being mobile, the officers could "strafe" the enemy. Anthony showed absolutely no fear ; he laughed at the prospect of a stray bullet knocking him out. "I hate war," he said to his companion coming home, "and all this slaughter is abominable, but I hope the General has got a job for us to-morrow. We must keep him up to the scratch."

On the second day they went and found billets for themselves at an *estaminet*. Indian troops were all round them ; there

was a plethora of dirt. Wilding and Woodward occupied two rooms with a door communicating. They were an eminently cheery, if unkempt pair, with Anthony always hankering after a new job.

On several occasions, on business in connection with his section, he went over to Dunkirk. There were always supplies to order, new contrivances to obtain, other "spade work" to perform. His thoughts were concentrated on armoured cars in those days, but that he had not altogether forgotten the lawn tennis court is shown by the following note, which he sent to Mr. Tunks, of Messrs. Mappin & Webb, Ltd.:

"DUNKIRK,
"*April* 21, 1915.

"Thank you very much for the trouble you have taken over the periscope. When it arrives I am sure that it will be splendid. I am up at the front now with the Indians, and there is a good deal of work for us.

Am well, but would like to come back to tennis."

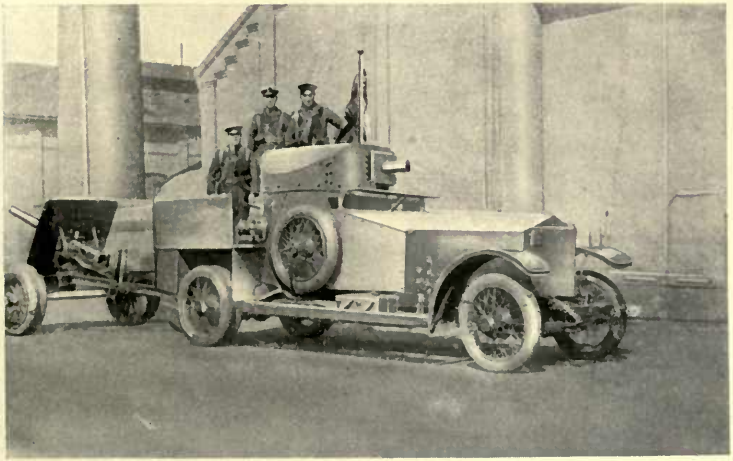
His sense of humour was not absent from some of his official memoranda. To the Transport Officer, Armoured Cars, he wrote on May 1 :

" Will you kindly forward at your earliest convenience to us : (1) Three electric flash-lamps for signalling ; (2) Roll of copper wire ; (3) Nuts and bolts for motor-cycle ; (4) An armoured kennel for the dog ' Samson.'

" P.S.—I will not expect these things until the bombardment of Dunkirk abates in fury."

" Samson " (so-called after Anthony's former commander) was an Irish terrier unofficially attached to his section. This dog had evidently resented the bombardment of Dunkirk. " Samson's " adventures did not end here. After Anthony had fallen, the dog, at the instigation of

PARIS, JANUARY, 1915: ATTACHED TO THE ROYAL NAVAL AIR SERVICE.



DUNKIRK, APRIL, 1915: OFF TO THE FRONT (TRAILER ATTACHED).

Lieutenant-Commander Chilcott, was conveyed back to England in an aeroplane, and was subsequently dispatched to the Wilding home at Christchurch.[1]

To expedite his dispatch to the front, Anthony was busy with a new invention. In a note to his mother from Dunkirk, he said, "Am building a new trailer, with 3-pound gun mounted, to run behind a light armoured car." This trailer, which had two wheels and was very mobile over rough ground, was his own idea; it was through his persistency and faith that the design was carried out.

On April 15, between his visits to Dunkirk, Anthony inspected the first-line trenches of the British Force, and had lunch in a dug-out. He had his first experience of sniping at close quarters. "Wilding," said one present, "was smiling all over his face." The officer who showed them the German lines through a periscope was amazed at his coolness.

[1] Thanks to the kindly interest of Miss F. Lessing.

Soon after this Anthony went off to Dunkirk again to experiment with the fire of one of his guns against entrenched sand-bags. A plot was hatching for his section to steal out in the night and attack an enemy blockhouse which was giving considerable trouble ; it was first necessary to see what effect the 3-pounders were likely to have on the obstruction. The Duke of Westminster notified that the trials were, thanks to Anthony's initiative, a great success. During his absence his section paraded before Sir Douglas Haig, Anthony subsequently chaffing Woodward on what he jokingly described as "your hundredth exhibition behind the lines."

Before his own little job came off, it was necessary for Anthony to gain an intimate knowledge of the lie of the land. Accordingly the General deputed Wilding and Woodward to go out with two dare-devil sapper captains. They spent a most exhilarating night. In the course of their "prowl" they came within 300 yards

of the German machine-guns, and were constantly under the glare of the German flashlights. Anthony wrote to the Duke: "This lends some variety to the monotony, especially when the expedition is led by sapper captains." They actually penetrated beyond the old front-line trench which ran through the Neuve Chapelle village. Once the two young officers separated, each escorted by his sapper captain. Meeting to compare notes after their exciting experience, Anthony did not mention that one bullet had struck a tree within a foot of his head.

April 19 was a red-letter day, for the trailer, at last completed, was brought over from Dunkirk behind an armoured car. "We are now ready for the big battle," said Anthony, with pardonable exultation. The new auxiliary was shown to all the generals, and was inspected by Sir Douglas Haig, who, mentions Anthony in one of his letters home, "spent half an hour with us this morning." It was believed that

a check to the machine-gun fire, so inimical to infantry advance, had been discovered. Preparations for the attack were advancing. General Anderson spoke to Anthony like a father. "Not a word about this to any one," he said, after confirming the plan of action.

On April 22, operating in General Southey's territory, Anthony arranged to destroy a well-known snipers' house, which had been giving a lot of trouble. The ordinary artillery could not be trained on it. The section set out that night, with two big armoured cars, for their destination. In order to show the drivers the way back, a circuitous route was taken. There was a bright moon, and as they might be subjected to heavy shell fire, a large element of caution had to be exercised. They halted at La Flinque about 10 p.m. One car was to go forward, and the other remain behind in case its companion fell into a shell hole and needed towing out. In that event a cyclist would be sent back.

Anthony hated melodrama of any kind, and when his brother officer, realising that he might never see him again, held out his hand, Anthony waved it unceremoniously away. In a moment he had his engine going and was off, later reversing slowly down to his position against the parapet of the front line trench. It had been arranged that the infantry should "rapid fire" in order to keep down the heads of the Germans. But before Anthony reached his allotted position the armoured car fell, as feared, into a shell hole. Scrambling out, he walked along the road under fire to advise the cyclist waiting in an improvised cemetery. Woodward and the second car got safely down, and the pioneer was dug out—an operation carried out within 200 yards of the enemy. Then Anthony reached his position, only to find that the light was not strong enough to sight his target. It was decided to wait until dawn, and the ordinary trench working parties which had been suspended for

this action resumed their labours. At 4.8 a.m., at a range of 350 yards, forty 3-pound Hotchkiss shells were put into the snipers' house. Something caught fire; they unquestionably had considerable effect. Anthony directed a slow and deliberate fire on the objective. There was no shelling in reply, only rifle fire, and they got clear away, reaching Lestrem, after travelling at "full rip," at 4.40 a.m.

For this operation—"my own little stunt," Anthony called it—he received the personal congratulations of General Southey. "I am very much obliged for the great assistance you have given us," the General wrote, going on to compliment him and Chief Petty Officer Robbins on their "excellent work." The same night he had the honour of dining with General Sir James Willcox. Among the guests was his friend, Sir F. E. Smith, who recalls that Anthony never appeared fitter in his life, and that when, near midnight, they walked home arm in arm to their

billets, he was eagerly anticipating his next mission.

An excellent glimpse of Anthony's life at the front about this time is conveyed in a letter which he wrote to Craig Biddle, at Philadelphia :

"*April* 26, 1915.

" I am writing in the room of a peasant's little cottage in Flanders. Troops going up and down, intermixed with hundreds of poor fellows wounded. Three or four miles away probably the greatest battle of all time goes on day and night without ceasing.

" My job : I have outside three guns and three armoured cars, all (for a wonder) under my command. My junior officer is away, so I have to run the whole business. A big attack commenced yesterday and my lot were ordered up to the front, but halfway were ordered back, and are now expecting new orders for Monday. The Germans shell like hell, and possibly the powers that be thought that we had better

wait until the shell holes in the road were mended. However, I have seen enough of war not to break my heart for a few hours' delay.

"Our principal job is to knock down houses parking German machine-guns. I got to within 320 yards of the Germans last night with three guns on an eight-ton armoured lorry, and gave a house forty rounds of the very best. The General wrote me a letter of congrats., but that is my only little gallery play so far. I really hate war and wish with all my heart the damned thing would end; but how or when God knows. All of the English officers, high and low, are the best imaginable."

Anthony's section accompanied the Lahore Division of the Indian Army on the way to Ypres. They had the two armoured cars, the trailer, and ammunition wagons; but some two miles from the town they were ordered to stop. The risk was too

great; they would have been blown to pieces. Anthony and Woodward sought shelter in a cottage for the night. Shells whistled around them, for they were on the outskirts of a salient. Sleep was out of the question. Once a man put his head into the cottage and intimated, somewhat anxiously, that a shell had burst only a hundred yards away. Anthony told him to clear out and not be a damned fool, and, when he had gone, remarked to Woodward, "A pleasant, reassuring sort of fellow!"

Before morning he had sent off a message to the General: "Am at Ouderdom in case you have forgotten me." He was ever anxious for more work. In the course of a letter to his mother, he wrote from here:

"I am waiting three or four miles behind the huge great battle (Ypres) now raging. The windows are shaking and rattling as I write. I was ordered up to the firing-line, then the order was countermanded,

The General gave me ten minutes yesterday, and explained the plan of attack. All very interesting—but the whole business is awful."

On May 2, when his section was about to return to Lestrem, Anthony received news of his promotion to captain's rank in the Royal Marines. He valued this mark of favour very highly, as well he might, for few officers had shown such courage and initiative in difficult surroundings. His C.P.O. tried in vain to get the extra stars in the neighbourhood. The problem was solved, however, by a friend, who cut the badges off a spare tunic.

Anthony was naturally very cheery on the return to Lestrem. His section pulled up at Meteren for a cup of coffee, but this interlude was cut short by the arrival of a despatch-rider, who directed them to hurry back to Headquarters, which they did under cover of darkness. Evidently something big was stirring.

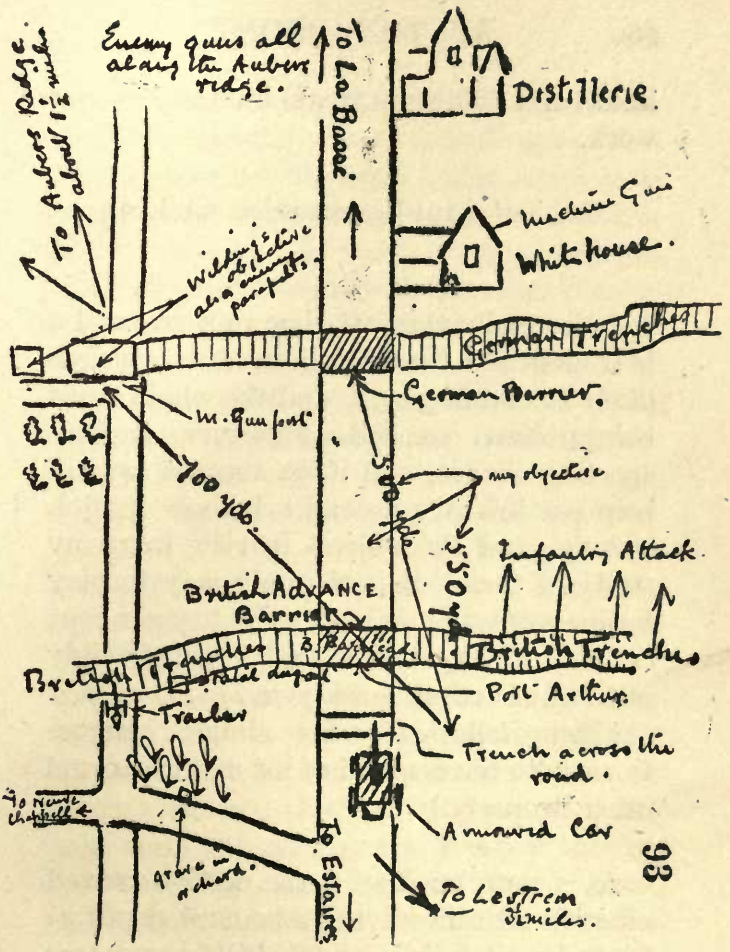
Early next morning (May 4) Anthony was round at General Headquarters asking for a job. "Why aren't we strafing something?" he said, in his characteristic way, to the General. The commission was not long delayed. The next day General Anderson sent for him and mentioned the great attack, in which a part was to be found for the armoured cars. He was tremendously keen on the settlement of plans. It seemed there were no guns mobile enough to place in position to destroy some machine-gun posts that promised to give inconvenient trouble during the projected advance. Anthony had volunteered for this job; he was now to be given his chance.

On May 7 Anthony and Woodward carried out their final reconnaissance at Port Arthur, which lay in the British first-line trench at the junction of the Rue de Bois and the Estaires—La Bassée road. During this reconnaissance the shells fell thick and fast; the officers were smothered

with mud. A Staff-captain showed some annoyance when Anthony put up the periscope over the trench. The Staff officer was ducking his head. Anthony was standing up straight and laughing.

Early on May 8, the eve of the attack, Anthony and Woodward spent a quiet hour or two in their billets at Lestrem. Both knew that the toughest job of all lay in front of them; both were aware that they might never come out of the venture alive. Anthony wrote two letters, one to his mother, the other to Lieutenant-Commander Chilcott, R.N. In the first (his last to Fownhope) he said:

"We are off directly to take part in a very difficult job. If all goes well, I think my little battery will do really great work, and help our infantry a lot. I will probably have three guns in action, but am going myself with the trailer. The General I am immediately under is General Anderson, and he has been very



PLAN OF GUN POSITIONS.

Drawn from a sketch made on the battlefield under fire.

kind, and taken a great interest in our work. . . ."

To Lieutenant-Commander Chilcott he wrote:

"For really the first time in seven and a half months I have a job on hand which is likely to end in gun, I, and the whole outfit being blown to hell. However, it is a sporting chance, and if we succeed we will help our infantry no end. I know the job exactly, and the objects in view from my study of them—it is the only way to play business or war. What I write to you about is this: if my trailer and I get forcibly put out of action, I ask you . . ."

(There followed a few simple instructions as to the disposal of his motor-car and other property.)

At 5 p.m. on May 8 the section moved off with all cars for the advanced depôt at Croix-Barbée. Here an excellent dinner was

served in a ruined cottage—the best dinner, Anthony declared, that he had eaten since he had been at the front. The ménu consisted of green-pea soup, roast lamb, fruit, and white wine. It was a lovely evening in early summer. Outside thousands of troops were tramping past for the coming action. For once the usual banter was hushed; each diner—and there were several other officers present—was gazing into an unknown future.

After the meal Anthony and Woodward went to Windy Corner to load up the armoured car with ammunition. They were now much nearer the enemy's fire. Their ways here lay apart, for Anthony and his trailer were to proceed alone to the position arranged in the front-line trench. Again he disdained to say "good-bye" to his brother officer. Not to attract the attention of the enemy, the journey had to be made in the dark without lights. Anthony and his C.P.O. took turns to walk in front of the trailer—so bad were the

roads. The difficulty of carrying up an adequate amount of ammunition was at length overcome, but two other journeys had to be made under a galling fire in the pitch dark.

When Anthony arrived at the trench to instruct the gun-layer as to the emplacement—and his gun was to be exposed for four feet over the parapet—he found the officer of the platoon in the immediate section to be none other than Lieutenant L. E. Milburn, of the 4th Suffolks, a well-known lawn tennis player and a personal friend. "He was in splendid health," recalls Milburn, "and seemed thoroughly pleased that at last he had been allowed to bring his gun right into the firing-line. He said that he had a free hand, and that if the British attack were successful, he intended to go forward with the trailer as soon as possible. Of course everybody knew that the morning of the 9th meant a lot of dirty work to be done."

That night in the trenches Anthony met

GRAVE AT NEUVE CHAPELLE.

(Photo by Lieut. H. C. Woodward, R.N.V.R.)

another lawn tennis friend, Lieutenant R. S. Barnes, also of the 4th Suffolks. They sat in the latter's dug-out (in which an officer of the Seaforths, engaged in the coming attack, slept peacefully) exchanging many lawn tennis reminiscences. Just before Anthony wrapped himself in an old coat, to snatch a brief sleep, Barnes said to him, "Well, old man, you were in rotten form when you met Brookes." Anthony merely shrugged his big broad shoulders, and replied, "One can't always be at one's best." It was his last reference to the game which he loved.

Aroused shortly after 4 a.m., Anthony, in prime fettle, was jollying Barnes for taking a cold bath. He thought it a great luxury. Then he proceeded to his Hotchkiss. On the way, just before the bombardment, he met Milburn (who was seriously wounded a little later). The latter was much struck by Anthony's appearance. "He had not troubled," Milburn recalls, "to put on the regulation

breeches and puttees, but strolled up in 'slacks' and low shoes, looking for all the world as if he were about to pop down in his car to Wimbledon. All the time I was out at the front I never saw any other officer in any branch of the service who turned out, with the certainty of a very strenuous time in front of him, in such a casual manner."

Anthony's gun-crew opened fire at 4.50 a.m. and continued firing with intervals for over ten hours. Firing had to be stopped several times because of shrapnel bursting over the gun, and because the sandbags on a level with the muzzle became ignited and smouldered. Anthony observed and directed the fire, both from the gun-platform and the trench, all the time under the hottest counter shelling. It was miraculous that he was not hit, considering that the gun was four feet above the parapet of the trench. "Captain Wilding was very cool and usual," says C.P.O. Robbins, "and his attitude undoubtedly had a very fine moral effect on his men." During the

day, Anthony received a message from Woodward—who was on the La Bassée road—advising him that the armoured car was hit and had stuck in a shell hole and could not get out. Would he direct his fire on the particular enemy's work that was shelling the car ?

At 4.30 p.m. Anthony had finished his particular job. When his gun-crew came down into the trench, they had loosed altogether about 400 rounds against the Germans. He sought a place to lie down, cracking a joke with his C.P.O. More than one officer warned him not to go into a dug-out, excavated in the parados to the right of his gun emplacement. It was directly in the danger zone, and more exposed to the fire of the enemy. There was far less risk in the trench itself ; but Anthony, always acting on his own judgment, crawled in. A young subaltern in the 4th Suffolks, Lieutenant Donald Pretty (member of a well-known Ipswich family), sat talking to him at the entrance. Shells

were hurtling near them. It was one of the greatest trench bombardments of the war.

At 4.45 there came a hearty burst of laughter from the dug-out. Immediately afterwards a heavy shell exploded on its roof. The catastrophe was complete. Aided by four men of the Suffolks, Chief Petty Officer Robbins dug through the débris. The bodies of two privates were taken out first ; then Lieutenant Pretty, still breathing ; finally, from a mass of iron, earth, and sandbags, all that remained of Captain Wilding. He had been killed instantly. His face was not damaged by the shell. Lying intact amid the wreckage, blown out of his pocket, was a gold cigarette-case—souvenir of Riviera lawn tennis triumphs in 1914, presented to Anthony by his friend and doubles partner, Craig Biddle.

Digging his car out under cover of darkness, Lieutenant Woodward advanced with a party of Indians, bearing a fresh supply of ammunition and rations for Anthony's

party on the morrow. He knew nothing of the tragedy then. On the way, taking shelter from a burst of firing in some ruins, he encountered one of the sapper captains previously mentioned, engaged in writing his report by the light of an electric torch. Recognising Woodward, he said casually, "Your friend Wilding is dead." It was a knock-down blow for his hearer, who, like many another, had loved Anthony. Arriving at the gun position, Woodward found Robbins sitting with his face in his hands. "That's all there's left of him," he choked out, pointing to a heap under a blanket.

Reverently gathered together, Anthony's remains were quietly buried the next morning, with many another hero, in an orchard which lay at the back of the trenches. The shelling had ceased. It was a Riviera day, warm and sunny. Lieutenant Barnes and members of the gun-crew were among the few who were able to witness the simple burial service. A rough

cross was made from packing-case wood and his name and rank inscribed on it.

. . . . .

To a friend in England his father wrote :

" It is better that Anthony should have fallen in the manful discharge of his clear duty than remained in safety in England."

Hundreds of letters[1] from all parts of the world reached his New Zealand home. I give extracts from three or four. The first is from Countess Grosvenor to his mother :

" I am feeling for you, far away, in your great sorrow—and pride—for your son. I have heard to-night from my son (the Duke of Westminster), who begs me to tell you how deeply he feels for you, and how great a loss it is to him also. He says ' he was one of my very best officers, and had just done such *very* good work.' Your dear

[1] The Lawn Tennis Associations throughout the world sent official letters of sympathy to Christchurch. All testified to his splendid sportmanship.

son was killed instantly, and my son says he would like me to tell you what he thought of him, that ' he was splendid.'

" You will find comfort in knowing that he was fighting *so* bravely, and giving all for his King and Country, and was so loved and had such happy days in England with his friends. I saw him not long before he left—and now he is among the band of heroes who have made the great sacrifice, and that will be your comfort, dear Mrs. Wilding."

The next is from Mr. Osterdahl Poulsson, written from Jövikhanen, Norway, to his father. He began, " Dear Mr. Wilding " :

" I call you so, even if you are an older man than I am, but you are the father of Tony Wilding, so I seem to know you. I heard about Tony's death from the Norwegian papers and wrote to Mr. Craig to get your address. It is rather a difficult task I have taken on—to write to a man

I never have seen, about the death of his son, and you will excuse me, if, as a foreigner, I may happen to be crude in my expressions. I don't mean to be, quite the other way about. You see, Tony came to us, my wife and I, when he was in Norway on business, and he visited us up here both in winter time and summer time. I taught him to ski, and he taught me some tennis, and we were great pals. I shall never forget his cheerful greetings every time we met, and all the go and dash he put into this slow Norwegian heavyweight that I am supposed to be. He won my heart the first day, Mr. Wilding, and has kept it ever since, and therefore his photograph which he gave me, has got to keep its place on my desk in the office, although the Mrs. wants me to take it over to the house.

"I hope you will understand that I write to you in this manner, however sad it is to you, but I do so because I am also very sad over having lost a very good

friend, one of those who have built a post along my path in this life. We will keep his memory green. Have I given expression to what I feel, and do you understand me ? "

The next is from Lieutenant W. Burn, airman, since killed by the Arabs in Persia. He wrote from Basra :

" I never knew him, but the deputy governor here was a great friend of his, and in his eyes Wilding was all that an English gentleman should be. He never tires of telling stories about his late friend, and it makes one feel proud to have come from the same town and country."

The last is from Lieutenant-Commander Chilcott, of the Royal Naval Air Service, to Mrs. Wilding :

" I had learnt to love him as few men love each other. My admiration for him

was unbounded, and I fear it will never be my good fortune during the remainder of my travel through this world to meet another friend with a nature such as his. I always felt that he was an example to his fellow-men in everything. God rest his great soul. . . ."

There is just one thing more. Early in October last, two of Anthony's trophies, a smoker's companion and scarf-pin, were sent by his mother to the Red Cross Committee at Christchurch. They were put up for auction, and realised £300. To what better use could his prizes have been put ?

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